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Sincerely, W. Edward Rafferty

# *Religion In the Heart*

*AND OTHER ADDRESSES*

*By*
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*I trust it will be agreeable to my many loyal hearers in the parish of the First Presbyterian Church of Chicago, where for nearly a score of years life was a rare bit of mutual fellowship and happiness, if here I dedicate this volume of sermons to them. They deserve a worthier recognition at my hands for that long period of affectionate toleration and inspiring co-operation. But they can have nothing out of my life from all those years in which more of my innermost self was released than these messages originally prepared and delivered to meet their stimulating spiritual hunger.*

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# Foreword

THE spontaneous and untrammeled release of a pulpit message should afford a well-nigh complete revealing of an honest man's mind and heart. Particularly should it be the case when his themes traverse the unchanging fields where lie the heart's major spiritual needs and carry him into the realms of those great spiritual realities he seeks for the solace of those who hear. These addresses that follow will belie me if, among other things, they do not reveal the joy that has pervaded the process of their preparation and delivery. No joys incident to a career of Christian work are comparable to the satisfying emotions born of the privileges of a Christian pulpit. This is true where there are no inhibitions of fear or doubt, restraining liberty and undermining confidence. When through a long preaching contact familiarity breeds equanimity and spiritual rest, then the soul of a preacher ought not only to find itself but to unfold new powers and claim new and sweeter joys with every hour.

The utterance from a pulpit that is passionless and sicklied with indifference cannot have been born in joy and can waken only joyless consequences. The crowded program of parish and

community life in a great city may not muffle the voice but is likely to touch the intellect with a deadening effect, unless a man courageously does battle on behalf of a quiet hour and a relentless régime of mental and spiritual feeding. These messages bear in their form and content the marks of the ruthless and decimating demands of those prior claims of human need that lie in the clamorous and suffering life of a city. But if, withal, there be here and there breaking forth a gleam of that joy which lives below every spoken word, the obvious inadequacies of the treatment of great subjects here discussed perhaps will be passed without comment.

W. C. C.

*Philadelphia, Pa.*

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# I

# RELIGION IN THE HEART

*"She set a rose to blossom in her hair*
*The day faith died—*
*'How glad,' said she, 'and free, at last I go,*
*And life is wide.'*
*But through long nights she stared into the dark*
*And knew she lied."*

—Fanny Lea.

*"The happiest heart that ever beat*
*Was in some quiet breast*
*That found the common daylight sweet*
*And left to Heaven the rest."*

—John Vance Cheney.

*"But I cannot stay God from His ploughing,*
*I, the lord of the field*
*While I stand waiting*
*His shoulders loom upon me from the mist,*
*He has gone past me, down the furrow, shouting*
*and singing*
*(I had said, it shall rest for a season,*
*The larks had built in the grass. . . .)*
*He will not let my field lie fallow."*

—Karl Wilson Baker.

# I

## RELIGION IN THE HEART

*"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."*—PROVERBS 4:23.

*"The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."*—ROMANS 5:5.

HRISTIANITY answers, as no other faith, the age-old and tormenting questions with which life challenges the intellect. It answers the question as to the origin of all things. It locates a centre of moral authority in the universe. It covers all human experience and destiny with a loving superintendence and sets up a personal and paternal relationship between man and the Creator of all things. It is at these high points of human anxiety that the Christian religion satisfies the mind.

But religion certainly must be something else besides a satisfying intellectual acquisition. If it be simply a satisfaction resident in the mind, taking up unshaking positions in the intellect, standing on foundations of perfectly good logic, nothing more, then its appeal to the whole human race, high and low, wise and otherwise, is a failure. If it be a thing of mind exclusively, then it must

be set down as another beautiful, philosophical cult among the thousands. It may explain the universe, but that is not enough. It may work out a theological system that meets successfully the metaphysical requisites and the logical necessities, but to heart-sick, sin-burdened, hopeless men and women, these achievements are not enough.

Does our Christian religion function in the realm of human feeling in a sane and satisfying way? We live more largely in our feelings than in any other realm. If there be no realization of religion possible in the realm of our emotions, nor any grip of its reality on our feelings, nor any tangible undoubted reaction from it in what we call the heart-life, then the Christian religion is doomed to dry up and die in the cold, high levels of the human intellect. Behind us, like the skeletons of lost caravans in the freezing heights of Tibet, lie religions and cults that insisted on ministering to the world of sorrow and sin exclusively through the mind. Their devotees starved to death on maxims and epigrams. They despised as dangerous and deceitful the feelings and all emotional reactions of religion and insisted that what men needed was intellectual light upon life and its problems. These old philosophers soon parted company with a needy race they could not help. On the other hand, the old mystics swept men to the other extreme. To them God and truth were incomprehensible, the revelations of God in Christ Jesus defied the grasp

of mind. Therefore, religion must forego the sanctions of the intellect. They insisted that ignorance was the mother of devotion. They rose as a living protest against a dead intellectual Church. They saw the Church with her metaphysics and philosophy and theology cold and corrupt. Men were wise and learned, but morally dead and religiously inert and helpless. Men believed with their brains but denied what they believed by lives that were cold and fruitless.

Thus arose the various groups of mystics. They lighted the fires in the heart. They sought to warm into life again the religion of Jesus that had chilled and died in the intellectual conclusions of ecclesiastical debates. Their pendulum swung too far. They gave no countenance to the mind, holding that it killed the spirit and choked the life of the soul with its definitions, arguments and syllogisms. So they cast it forth from the temple and turned exclusively for their interpretation and understanding of religion to the heart, where they believed the Spirit of God spoke directly and in a way to be felt and understood. This theory of religion landed these holy men into trouble. Feelings broke from the moorings of common sense and orderly living, and swept them from things sane and sound in human experience. They found high mountain peaks of spiritual exaltation and lived in the glorious sunlight of lofty altitudes of spirituality, but they allowed the poor miserable world to suffer and

die, unaided. Religion became for them a personal, exclusive, subjective, spiritual luxury. It made for a holy selfishness which expressed itself in superb acts of self-abnegation! It repelled the ordinary man by its unhealthy spiritual reactions. So Mysticism passed.

Has the Christian religion something in it that makes it a practical, recognizable thing in my daily experience? Is it something not only that I can believe but can also feel at work in my heart and life? If evil things move my emotions and thrill in my blood, may I not justly expect some opposite corresponding effect of the good? You may. It would appear that about seven-eighths of our religion lies in the always troubled and restless sea of feelings where most of our spiritual needs have their origin. It is remarkable with what little amount of thinking we may get on, if we have the assurances of a personal experience of our religion in this vast, needy realm of human feeling. This is not to deprecate the vital place thinking has in our faith, but to show what a satisfying supplement to our thinking faith provides.

Among the things good men yearn for as they face life and its alterations of experiences are: *equanimity, happiness, moral enthusiasm.* Now, will the Christian faith provide that even-mindedness which enables a man to hold his way and keep his spirit in wise restraint no matter what outward conditions may be? Can a man get a

rigid steadfastness of character and a persistency in the ongoing of his moral conduct by taking into his life the things of the Christian religion?

One feels this to be vital to his dignity as a man. He cannot reconcile a restive and disturbed state of mind with any kind of solidity of character or worthwhile career. Men want an anchorage that holds and while holding makes them conscious of its unyielding grip upon the things beneath, assuring them that they are safe and at rest, blow winds, roll seas, beat billows, come what will. We do not wish to be told that these disturbing things about us do not exist, but are simply claims of error and must be denied and dismissed before any equanimity can come. This is asking too much of our common sense and honest sensibilities. We know that needles prick, and teeth ache, and fever burns, and a thousand hurts born out of the physical basis of our life stand ready to torment us. When through the channels of our real nerves we take joys and pleasurable feelings, we must not deny the reality of those same nerves when ill and hurt they report to our sensoriums the opposite experiences. No one respects an equanimity that is born of blindness to the facts of life.

A faith that is open-eyed to sickness and sorrow and death is the only faith that can bring me serenity and steadfastness. Men want a Saviour who will look into the peril of the black, stormy night as a reality and say to the waves, " Be still,

for the Son of God commands," and to His disciple, " Be calm, for the Son of God is your companion." He had the living realities of life in mind when He said, " Come unto me all ye that know the reality of labour and are heavy laden with actual burdens your sensibilities are aware of and I will give you rest." He does just this.

We wish to be happy. It is not the main object of living, but we crave it. We have a right to it. Joy puts such a radiant atmosphere over all life that it becomes a poor, cramped, meagre thing if there be in it no real happiness. Happiness seems to release the intellectual and physical powers and give them a scope and a sense of amplitude that otherwise they never know.

Happy people succeed. They achieve. They are our best workers, our conspicuous salesmen, our most striking leaders, our best teachers. It is the radiant countenance and the cheerful spirit that gets farthest into your office when you are busy. It is the cheer-giving man that engages you longest when you are burdened with a big schedule. You want your children taught by happy teachers. You want happy foremen to organize happiness in your factory. You want happiness at your meals and joy in your dinner company. The sermon or anthem that overflows with spiritual happiness touches and helps. Sidney Smith, in his lectures on " Benevolent Affections," well said, " Mankind is always happier for having been happy. So that

if you make a man happy now, you make him happy twenty years hence by the memory of it."

This is not some superficial grace, nor some popular affectation. It is not something born of a complacent, good nature. Every genuine smile, every radiant countenance is a triumph of the love of God in the heart. The thing that beams in the face first works like a sweet magic fire in the heart and there kindles the light that glows later upon the face. The doctrine of God's care over us, and the teaching of Jesus concerning our relation to Him and to our fellows, work to make men happy and to give birth to good cheer. It is un-Christian to frown and pour out gloom upon people. It is a denial of the faith we confess. It is re-enacting again the tragic denial of Peter though under different guise. In the quest for happiness today, people, old and young, are going far astray. They are missing the mark in thinking happiness is born of things. Things they get. Things they do, things they see. Things!

The physical accessories of happiness are negligible. Dancing—a thing of physical enjoyment—is taking the time, the energy, the modesty, the mentality of young people in the quest for happiness. It is at present an obsession, the like of which the generation has never known. It has been reported that the twelve largest public dance halls of Chicago gather each week an average of 90,000 young people, while nightly in five hundred

other halls many other thousands gather! They seek joy. The extreme and indelicate forms of dancing not only at degrading dance halls, but in select parties at clubs and hotels by our own young people, do not bring happiness and are wholly unpardonable. The jazz music born of the jungle, sensuous and seductive, is spoiling the purity and beauty of our young people and bidding for passions that stain. These are among the false lures that call when men are looking for happiness. Only as we plant the seeds of real joy in our hearts, by taking Christ's principle into our life, will real happiness come.

Moral earnestness, a most satisfying accompaniment of the Christian life, is the mainspring of unselfish service. Men need a reservoir of spiritual power to keep their Christian program steady in the face of obstacles without and temperamental dissuasion within. This is a supreme heart element without which no program of philanthropy or religion can long survive. The commanding resolution to say and do, making thereby a definite commitment, often comes amidst the aroused earnestness of a season of revived spiritual interest. Men often respond to a call that comes with profound emotional experience. The emotional experience gave positive and compelling power to the will in the hour of choice. New resolutions were easy and a new program of work seemed most feasible. In the glow of that fresh impulse

for service, every cross seemed sweet and all burdens a joy.

But in the long, hard way that followed, the ecstasy of that early moment of decision subsided. The romance and thrill of the spiritual adventure died. There is something drab and tedious about the routine of the day's work in the church or mission, people are not co-operative in their spirit. New ideas and visions are duly accepted by them as commonplace. Obstacles are frequent and the strain is heavy. Ere long courage weakens, joy in the task subsides and interest lags. The moral pressure relaxes and the program that once appealed no longer inspires. The explanation is obvious. The man's moral enthusiasm is waning. The dynamic centre of the man's life has lost its power.

What churches and philanthropies and welfare organizations need in the long hard years of testing is not money, not organization, not leaders, but that spiritual fervour born of the unselfish oughtness that lives only where Christ's Cross stands. This alone guarantees moral fervour in the lives of men.

This drives men on over difficulties and discouragements and holds them steadily to the task, come what will! It is faith in God that generates adequate power! It holds the loyalty of men to the life-long program of the cross. That which glowed in Christ's heart as He pressed on toward the hill

and kept His face steadfast toward the holy but hostile city, must burn in us today lest we grow weary in well doing and faint by the way. As Adoniram Judson sings:

*In spite of sorrow, loss and pain,*
*Our course be onward still,*
*We sow on Burmah's plain,*
*We reap on Zion's hill.*

# II

# THE MAN JESUS CHRIST

*"Give us a virile Christ for these rough days!*
*You painters, sculptors, show the warrior bold,*
*And you who turn mere words to gleaming gold,*
*Too long your lips have sounded in the praise*
*Of patience and humility. Our ways*
*Have parted from the quietude of old;*
*We need a man of strength with us to hold*
*The very breach of Death without amaze.*
*Did He not scourge from temple courts the thieves?*
*And make the arch-fiend's self again to fall?*
*And blast the fig tree that was only leaves?*
*And still the raging tumult of the sea?*
*Did He not bear the greatest pain of all,*
*Silent, upon the Cross on Calvary?"*

—Rex Boundy.

*"O man of mine own people, I alone*
*Among these alien ones can see thy face,*
*I who have felt the kinship of thy race*
*Burn in me, as I sit where they intone*
*Thy praises,—those who, striving to make known*
*A God for sacrifice, have missed the grace*
*Of Thy sweet human meaning in its place,*
*Thou who art of our blood-bond and our own."*

—Florence Frank.

## II

## THE MAN JESUS CHRIST

*"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."*—I Timothy 2:5.

WE seek a new path across a very old field. Let us make a cross-section of manhood, hoping to reveal the masculine elements that make men what they are, and then look at Christ in the light of these elements. It ought to be true that the greatest masculine Figure of all time was so genuinely and obviously masculine in His traits and general disposition that men have been drawn to Him by the attraction of the purely human elements that He shares with them and which they see in Him, before they recognize the superhuman elements of His character. Here is a striking feature in persuasive and convincing evangelism.

We recognize that the Jesus of history has been feminized. The feminization, as we have it, is easily explained. Jesus incarnates, perfectly, as in no other character, the qualities of tenderness and gentleness and refinement which find their finest human expression in women. The artists, in softening the lines of His face in order to portray these

lovely traits, made His features predominantly feminine.

Then, unfortunately, too, the notion has coloured men's thinking that goodness and purity, gentleness and virtue, were not consistent with strength and a full quota of red-blooded, masculine qualities. So we have been compelled to re-humanize and re-masculinize Jesus after the painters and artists and the emotionalists have discussed Him—but always with the same result. He is "the man Christ Jesus."

Taking man just as we have him, what are his distinct masculine ingredients? You assay composite minerals with a blowpipe, but we have no laboratory apparatus to help in analyzing man! He is so disguised and masked that we do not see what is before us when we look. That part that has to do with bulk or his dimensions in space is the small and unimportant part of this thing at which we look. The shrewdest and most penetrating inquirer that has ever tried to tell us what he really saw when he looked at this "invisible object" has given it up and presented us with an extravagant eulogy instead of an analytical formula. Shakespeare puts into the mouth of the depressed, but wonderful Hamlet what may be regarded as the sum total of his conclusions concerning man, when he prompts him to say: "What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty!—in form and moving how ex-

press and admirable! In action how like an angel! In apprehension how like a god! The paragon of animals! And yet to me, what is this quintessence of dust? "

And, whether it be the unanswered question of this greatest knower of men in modern literature, or the satirical observations in the thirty-eighth chapter of Job, or the fiery denunciations of St. Paul in the first chapter of Romans, these wise men who speak seem to have arrived at almost the same conclusion, viz.: that man is an interesting, but insoluble problem.

But in spite of this deadlock of the analysts and students in regard to man, there are clearly discoverable, easily distinguishable, native masculine elements in man that answer well the purpose we cherish.

Something differentiates him from the other great department of the human race, long before you come to talk about his anatomical structure or his physiological functioning. He is something more than a biological product. Masculinity is something more than anatomy. It is a soul property before it is a sex-aspect. Somewhere along the mysterious pathway in the progress of the unborn, perhaps, before anatomy had issued its decree of individual destiny for the life-germ, God breathed into that potential unit, about to be ushered into immortality through the gateway of humanity, certain elements—we later learned to call masculine.

They were like chemical ingredients received into the blood stream at the fountain head, producing definite and permanent results. They are elemental and fixed in the tissue of life itself. When the masculinizing processes begin we do not know; but begin where they may and end where they may, they shape thoughts, determine traits, give character to will power and quality to judgment, weaving a distinctive fibre into the whole warp and woof of life. Masculinity is a spiritual portion long before it is a biological distinction. Men, as men, bring certain elements of heart life and distinctive mental endowments, certain emotional qualities into the great total experience of the race, without which life should be meagre and ineffective.

It is not difficult to show that these innate masculine qualities, when spiritualized, are the very qualities that Jesus puts premium on, in the calling of men into His service as disciples. And no man is giving proper release to the inborn and unique qualities with which he is endowed and which make him different from the other great hemisphere of humanity, until he has put these masculine faculties upon the altar of a dedicated life.

The present period in the religious life of the world is ripe for the mobilizing of these masculine qualities in Christian service. We shall not see the armies of God go through the lines of opposition in our strange, new, modern life and take strongholds of evil and garrison them with the good until men

everywhere let God have His way in their lives, fully commandeering these distinctively masculine traits. When men in the church of America will permit these strong, masculine elements of their soul's life to be harnessed to the goals of Jesus, then Pentecostal power will fall and fill the Church and all life with spiritual blessings. When men will permit these unique qualities of manhood to be sanctified and energized by the passion for service that brought Christ's own blessed masculinity to its perfect fruitage, the Church of Christ, as His agent, will transform the world.

Until our men wake to the moral meanings to the race of their solemn sex inheritance preserved in these forceful elements of masculine nature and measure with good conscience the obligation thereby imposed for leadership and service in society, we are not to bring our land with its millions of men and women into fellowship with our Lord.

What are some of the masculine features of Jesus? *Jesus showed a distinct mark of masculinity in what we may call His race hunger.* There is a passive race hunger in women. It is aggressive and dominant in man. He was the farthest removed from an ascetic or misanthrope of any in His generation. He was the greatest individual, but not an individualist. He was gregarious. He loved the crowds. He was at home in vast, surging companies. He commanded them. People satisfied

His human cravings and appealed to His innate sense of race. This made Him a cosmopolitan. He preached a Gospel that was adapted to vast social units. His Gospel of the people, for the people, put Him in the vanguard of a new type of civilization in which great groups of men best realize as groups their highest welfare. It was the norm of the world's democracy. It wiped out petty geographical distinctions. It obliterated castes of colour and social differences and compelled a racial oneness unheard of in the story of men.

The human source of much of that vast world outlook, that vision toward humanity that made of this provincial Palestine Jew a world citizen and benefactor, and the one supreme Saviour of human society of all ages locates in this racial hunger as a supreme masculine quality! This God-given trait, imbedded in the sex-character of man, supplied human qualifications for the divine altruism and unselfishness of Jesus that made Him glad to sacrifice everything for the sin-cursed race. This racial hunger that went with His masculinity enabled Him to thrust His redeeming truth into the unhappy human social relations of life. He met days of toil, He walked the highways misunderstood and despised, He forwent the joys and blessings of home and friends, He climbed the steepest hill the world ever saw and He died to crown a program of racial love that appalled His enemies and drew a world to Him.

Men must sanctify and direct that innate sense of responsibility for the race that lives in their sex qualities. We must seize that holy purpose of Jesus to leave nothing undone necessary to bring all men of every race into vital relations with God. We must do everything in our power to give men His viewpoint of the race as a subject of redemption and impart to others His feeling for all men outside the pale of truth. This can be done when men, as men, give adequate and God-ward expression to their strong, masculine impulses. These yearnings of the heart toward the race must push men to the farthest horizon of human need. It is a spiritualized masculine urge to which Christian men must respond!

*There was an unmistakable aggressiveness about Jesus that belongs to men.* It was a masculine mark that put Him fully and completely into the class of red-blooded, genuine manhood. He qualified on this point early. In fact, at twelve years of age, He began to break His own intellectual and spiritual pathway with a surprising freedom. It was an unprecedented line of conduct for a boy and wrought havoc with parental notions. But an unshackled Man of God was forming a life program. If we associate Jesus and His life with a soft, feeble, self-assertion that evades issues because they make men uncomfortable, or with a character that preferred to talk in harmless generalities rather than direct and definite assertions

that thrust like spear points into the enemies' complacency, we are greatly mistaken. Jesus was a force, a vigorous, vital fact, a personality that won, a leader who led, a man who moved, a current that no one could turn.

Roger Babson, who has set up a pulpit in every clearing-house and Board of Trade, in a commercial letter says: "It makes me impatient to have people refer to Jesus as a 'poor, wandering carpenter's son.' If you have any doubt as to Jesus' ability to make money, if He had so desired, just read the story of His taking money from the fish's mouth, the story of His multiplying the loaves of bread so as to feed five thousand, the story of His turning water into wine, or the story of His calling His disciples to cast their net on the other side of the ship. Any man who could so impress the people regarding material things could have become a great leader in finance, industry or politics. If Jesus were poor in worldly goods, it was not because He could not make a business success. Jesus recognized the fact that when one gets enough to eat and wear and a place to live, things then lose their value. He realized that the enduring pleasures of life come only from a development of man's spiritual nature. For this reason, I am interested in presenting religion as a tangible asset for the man of affairs."

If there are men who have not hitherto given themselves to Christ's cause, under the pre-

judgment that there was something in it so effeminate as to make it non-compelling, let them once more face the full-length portrait of Jesus in the setting of the New Testament records. They have not seen Him. He is the most self-assertive personality the world ever saw. But His self-assertion never exceeded His ability or willingness to pay the price of the position He dared to assume. And it led Him sweating His very life-blood through the Garden of Gethsemane, and to the triumphant death on the Cross!

Looking at this aggressive Man moving on toward duty, we are ready to respond to those familiar lines of Richard Watson Gilder:

*"If Jesus Christ is a man—*
*And only a man—I say*
*That of all mankind I cleave to Him,*
*And to Him will I cleave alway."*

We have a right to claim dogged persistency as a distinctly masculine quality. Not that there is not in women stability and adamantine character, but that men, by all that goes to make up the weight, bulk and momentum of their character, are noted for "carrying on" with a stubborn, unyielding front. There was nothing more conspicuous in the make-up of Jesus than His persistency. His gentle face was rigid with iron purpose. No opposition ever turned His purpose. His own family lost heart, His fellow churchmen lost pa-

tience, His disciples lost courage, His cause lost followers, His message lost weight and prestige, but on and on He went! Plotters plotted and unwise friends made sad mistakes, false friends wrought treachery, national leaders scorned His words, but on He went. There is a positive element of moral courage in His kind of persistency. There is the push of an indomitable moral motive, the call of an unreached vision that keeps Him moving on and on over impossible conditions.

Beyond the horror and sickening memory of the carnage at Verdun, there is ever to be remembered the glory of a spectacle in which persistency gilded the sunset clouds of life for five hundred thousand patriots that went to death in defense of France. There is a moral impressiveness in that persistency that persisted for others that moves us to tears as we think of Verdun and the Argonne Forest, where 750,000 of our own soldiers pushed on and on!

Stubbornness may be hateful when behind it lie selfish purposes, but when transfigured by a spirit of love and self-abnegation, stubbornness becomes a sanctified passion without which the Kingdom lags. I hold that this special quality has been most completely exemplified in men and that Jesus puts premium on it. He had the iron of it in His own blood. He set His face and nothing turned it.

Men must feel the call of such a personality. Men must feel the power in their lives, today, of this compelling trait of Jesus. Life for some men

lacks ongoing persistency. They have lost a native masculine trait. They are not moving on. They shift positions; they make no Godward advance. Out of a soul that never wavered, from a heart that never quailed, Jesus calls to His brother-man, and says: " Use all the masculine gifts I share with you; sanctify and harness your persistency to unselfish aims, leave this indefinite non-committal living and dedicate, without reservation, your whole, indomitable self to God and man! "

There is another masculine trait in Jesus that we may call a tearless tenderness. I mean a quick sensitiveness before need, that chooses, rather, to organize a program of assistance, than to shed tears or talk sweetly about the situation. It is a combination of self-restraint and fine duplicity. Men will not cry. The masculine reserve that seeks to divert attention from any incipient outbreak of emotion, by the well-known devices of coughing, or the use of the handkerchief, is back of the trait I seek to describe. Dry-eyed without, but a boiling ocean of tears within, is the situation that men are familiar with.

Can you think of Jesus looking at a group of blind men on the street whose sightless eyeballs are lifted toward Him and not feel a tide of tenderness sweep over Him? How near to tears He must have been when the polluted beggars stood afar off and cried: " Jesus, have mercy on me." What must the Greatheart of the race have felt as He looked

at polluted womanhood and at the outcast lepers? His was a restrained and tearless tenderness that went at once to work! He wept, according to record, but once. Every tear a lense magnifying His human qualities. He worked incessantly to give expression to those unshed tears—just like a man.

What a wonderful example to follow! How compelling His personality and how irresistible His love! Every man to whom His Gospel has come ought to respond to this masculine program of Jesus. He was a man, He lived with men and He died for man!

# III

# THE CITY

*"The place where the Cross of Christ was planted was a strategic point. The Lord Jesus Christ set us this example when He bade His disciples begin at the metropolis."*

*"Calm soul of all things be it mine!*
*To feel amidst the city's jar,*
*That there abides a peace of things*
*Man did not make and cannot mar."*

—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

*"The word of God came unto mè,*
*Sitting alone among the multitudes;*
*And my blind eyes were touched with light*
*And there was laid upon my lips a flame of fire."*

—HELEN KELLER.

*"Soldiers of Christ*
*For battle grow keen.*
*Heaven-sent winds*
*Haunt alley and lane.*
*Singing of life*
*In town meadows green*
*After the toil*
*And battle and pain."*

—VACHEL LINDSAY.

## III

## THE CITY

*"And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal."*

—REVELATION 21 : 16.

SO absorbed was John in the life and character and possibilities of the city, so familiar with its dominant aspects, architecturally and otherwise, that when he dreamed of heaven it took on the features of a glorified earthly city with foundations of jasper, walls of amethyst and gates of pearl. There never was more sin nor more human sorrow in the world than was concentrated in the cities of John's day. But the intuitions of this old city-lover revealed to him the spiritual possibilities wrapped up in a great, populous city so clearly that in spite of all the things that marred its beauty, the city prefigured for him heaven itself. This required a keen perception and an ability to discriminate between things as they appear and things as they are to be.

With this vision of John in mind let us empha-

size the creative and inspiring character of a great city, noting how its foundations are laid and safeguarded. Then, I hope, the case having been stated, everyone will be able to locate his personal responsibility in the matter of organizing and maintaining the forces that can and will make the modern city a redemptive agency in the social, economic and spiritual world.

We should talk more about the creative and inspiring character of a great city. The honest, constructive critic of the social order is always unpopular, but his is an important task. Any man who allows a false pride in his city to blind his eyes to sordid facts or to dull his soul to the shocking phases of a city's life, or to convince him that because there is external beauty and prosperity there can be no internal corruption and no deadly evil working in the life of that city, is a false friend and his leadership in public life is a menace.

The time has come when intelligent, forward-looking men and women who are working and praying for better things, should recognize the creative and redemptive influences touching human life and character as they live and move in a great city. We have never been quite balanced in our judgment on this point. We have incessantly bemoaned the dark, discouraging phases of city life. Many writers, when discussing the moral life of our American cities, have considered the fittest descriptive at their disposal the historic synonym

for total civic depravity,—" Sodom." A reference being to a civic situation so utterly hopeless that it had to be cured by fire and brimstone. There were not even ten godly men, according to the divine census, in the rotten town who were available for any kind of spiritual leadership when the crisis came. The soul of Sodom was dead. It fell to a moral ruin which brought on its physical destruction. Walking over its site, one sees, today, bleak desolation and a wilderness of death.

But Sodom is not the word to be used to describe our modern city. Social writers, trying to arouse indifferent people, call the city a " festering sore on the body politic." They mean to say it is a loathsome, dangerous thing, a symptom of a sick body. An eruption that taints and annoys. Reformers have called the city the plague spot of our democracy, holding that in the city, as in a hot-bed, are bred all the political and economic heresies and all the wild theories of the social and political order. They have the statistics to prove that in the city crime is nourished, anarchy is sheltered and everything that disintegrates and destroys has its home. Of course, every known phase of human depravity, in all its lurid forms, flourishes in the dark purlieus of the city. Every vagary that the restless mind and bitter heart of man devises is here. We shall, of course, take this for granted; why not take something else for granted?

Nothing is more depressing to the spirit of young

leadership waiting to be called to service, than these utterly hopeless, one-sided, and inadequate conceptions of city life. We may never be able to take Sodom from the front page. No one would desire to minimize the fact of sin and moral degeneracy, crime and lawlessness that mar the peace and joy of the great groups of our fellow-men living together in the modern city. After twenty years of intimate experience in the heart of a great American city, I bear testimony to the fact that there is another and a really glorious side. Only in the atmosphere of hope and assurance based on the facts that cheer and on figures that encourage and on good men and movements as sacrificially they serve in a great city's higher life, can we build a platform of redemptive principle and call to its promotion a leadership that will make John's dream of the holy city come true. There was enough spiritual indifference in the city to make Jesus weep as He approached it, but we know as well that in that city He found the human elements out of which He organized Pentecost and a spiritual movement that transformed the face of human society and wrote a new chapter in human history. These things must be proclaimed on the housetop by honest men while the cynic, the social pessimist and the bitter radical are filling the air with their gloomy pictures of modern city life.

There are certain conclusions about the city that we all accept. They compel our appreciation of

the city as a great, unescapable human factor. We must figure definitely on the city as an ally if we plan to save the world.

First: The city is an economic necessity. Centralization of human life began as an economic and protective measure. Men found they could live better and more safely by living closer together.

With all our intricate and complex ways of modern living and doing business, the city becomes more and more an economic necessity. We more and more need segregation in groups to get things done. It is well-nigh true that when you put people together their potential is in proportion to their numbers. Nature puts our nerves into compact, knotty ganglia, a magnificent instance of co-operation in the mass, out of which she develops the force with which she drives our physical machinery. The cities are the nerve ganglia of modern civilization. In spite of the airplane, the radio, the swift and easy contacts, the wiping out of space, the economical necessity of the city, as such, grows more apparent. For trade and commerce, for collecting and distributing what we eat or wear, for buying and selling, the city as we have it is a necessity. It always has been, it always will be. No matter what the idealist with easy formulas for human helping may say. The city is an economic necessity.

Second: The city is a social privilege. Its lure to lonely country boys and girls we all can under-

stand. It brings them to the city in endless processions. They see its lights and love its vast moving crowds. They feel the touch of its gay life as it goes by in the limousines or is visible through windows of aristocratic hotels and clubs. Human contacts are at close range. There are congenial groups available. There are privileges made possible in the great social co-operation of a city that become the goals for which thousands strive. There are doors of welcome that everywhere swing wide to people in a city, opening into magic corridors where people talk and play and sing and paint and dance and taste the joys of social contact. On every hand are efforts to satisfy a deep, insatiable human craving. This is not an expression of anything regrettable or degraded in human life, but the revelation of a divine gift of fellowship and a love of brotherhood on which we must be wise enough to build the holy city. We must not let the social instincts of man that have pulled the city together pull the city apart, but be the means of lifting it.

Third: The city is an intellectual stimulus. It releases forces into life to which men respond and, responding, find their intellectual experiences enriched and expanded. When the street-car men went from the task of driving the old horse-cars to the cable-cars, they took perforce an intellectual step up. Then when the clumsy cable gave way before the majestic power of electricity, the old

horse-car driver became a fellow craftsman with Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Edison. They added to the circumference of their brains another intellectual ring. In a thousand ways unseen, inaudible, compelling, persistent, the city and its life is working to stimulate the intellectual life of her people long before we began to talk of its schools and colleges and art galleries and orchestras and literary clubs. It is an irresistible intellectual tonic.

Fourth: The city is a breath-taking communal achievement. It does things in a communal way that rival the accomplishments of empires. When a city feels the urge of a civic ideal she has a co-operative power at her disposal that makes miracles easy. The unparalleled wonder in the realm of civic improvements in a modern city is the development of the Lake Front under the Chicago Plan Commission. This gigantic enterprise in community co-operation on behalf of beauty, health and happiness typifies the possibilities in communal co-operation in all directions, when honest leadership led by ideals and backed by an intelligent and generous popular support, takes its place in a great city.

These are features of city life that compel our admiration and advise us of potential things. There are in the city great dormant gifts, fine capacities, splendid resources that all our men and women moving on higher levels of leadership must seek to capitalize for God and the general good.

American people are apt to capitalize all of these inspiring city factors for mere money-making or selfish living. They do not see and understand the spiritual potential of these things that are inherent in the life of a great city. These things quicken civic pride and at the same time dull our consciences. True civic greatness goes with power and enthusiasm in nourishing those substantial and abiding realities of life for which all money-making really exists.

We recall that the foundations of John's Holy City were four-square. A city's greatness cannot be built on her market triumphs, nor on her manufacturing output, nor on her industrial, mercantile or transportation supremacy. These things may make a city big, but they cannot make it great. Contractors who build skyscrapers must put foundations under them capable of bearing the weight of mighty towers. They know better than to trust to surface sands. They drive their caissons to the limestone strata far below and pour in the cement that makes in forty hours what would take nature forty million years to duplicate! Then with their footings on the everlasting rocks, they go skyward with confidence, setting lines of architectural beauty that charm the world. They lift towers and domes and columns and arches competent to receive splendid doorways, mullioned windows and corridors of marble. The invisible essential things without which there would be nothing, are the hid-

den footings far below, where on the primal rock of God's creation, stability and strength are guaranteed. What footings can we locate for the noble city of tomorrow?

First: A competent unselfish leadership in public affairs. Two qualifying words standing here together will solve the civic problems of America so far as they can be solved in a world where a total solution is never to be expected. When a city will train up, in her homes and schools, a generation of competent and unselfish leaders who will go to civic life and service as they go to the army or the navy or the post-office or the diplomatic service, in order to give as potential citizens their best to the service of the city, then effective government will be possible. Two things have ruined municipal government in America: incompetency and selfish greed. The record of failure in our city governments, in our otherwise wonderful nation, brings a blush to our cheeks. Men who are accustomed to great responsibilities in business, citizens whose motives are high and whose characters are above reproach, have, through the years, steadily refused to accept leadership in the politics of our American cities. They have turned from the duty and left it to men who traded on it as a business and who prostituted for gain the sacred privileges of public office. Until good men and women in the precincts, wards and districts of our cities become so sensitive to their patriotic obligations that they will rise up to take

their share in leadership and pay the price in service, we may expect to find disreputable ward heelers and grafting individuals marring the government and ruining the ideals of civic life and character. The times demand on behalf of the better life of the city the willing, competent, leadership of good men.

The second footing for the foundation of a great city is a rising level of upright public opinion, as expressed in a clean, honest press. The reading masses are as sensitive as mercury. The headlines of a morning or evening paper colour the feelings, affect the temper and shape the program of a whole city. What people read today in the daily press is a more influential factor than anything that touches a city's life. A column of news can be so written as to poison the life of a city, irrespective of the character of the news. A paper can let loose ugly feelings in a crowd more effectively than any soapbox orator.

It can throw out a false alarm and start a mental panic with ten lines of nonpareil that a column of editorial matter cannot correct. The city papers, today, are the greatest intellectual apparatus for reaching the mind and moving the motives of the masses that civilization has. The papers can kill or cure. They can set up or tear down. No city is safe unless it knows that this marvellous fountain of information and influence is organized to pour forth waters that are sweet and clean. This does

not mean that censorship should tamper with news matter, nor that the columns of the newspaper should be closed against news that shock the sensibilities and taint the memory of the public. It would be moral suicide for a city to repress the horrible or cover up the sickening tragedies that warn men of the fatalities of sin. But no city is safe unless it feels sure that those who own great city dailies are above the bribe of money or false, cheap popularity. A city is fortunate if it has papers that are dominated by high ideals and clean purposes. A city is thrice blessed if its papers are willing to take leadership in all active measures that seek to solidify the moral foundations of the community.

There are such great dailies and such newspaper proprietors. I know an owner of a dozen great American dailies. He represents always positive and courageous newspaper leadership in every public issue where moral principles are involved. He considers the New Testament good copy. He is not afraid to spread a sermon on his editorial page. Back of all that is written the public knows there are fixed moral standards that shape all policies and govern all the utterances of his papers. There is no help in building the foundations of a great city from newspapers that are cynical toward all good. Those that burlesque all moral reforms and encourage every kind of lawlessness by inviting disobedience of particular laws are a menace to

good order. No class of men have more solemn responsibility resting upon them in the matter of making a city than our newspaper owners and editors. They can be the very corner-stones of stability and progress or they can be the fatal influences that undermine and disintegrate the very fabric of a city's true greatness.

Third: The third footing for the foundations of a great city is to be found in the existence of a creative group of institutions founded by the people and for the people in the service of altruism, philanthropy and art.

These, in fact, are the effects and not the cause of greatness. There must be a certain richness in the soil of a city's life before these things can spring up. I have sat on a hospital board for many years with busy, burdened city men. When I think of the four hundred and seventy-five broken in body lying at this moment in the clean, white beds of a great hospital made possible by the gifts of generous people, when I think of one hundred other hospitals and dispensaries in the same city with an army of physicians, surgeons and nurses, when I think of homes for our incurables where death, like a ball and chain, is tied to every guest, when I go into the homes for aged people, when I hear the cry of motherless children in the memorial orphanages and listen to happy voices singing Christmas carols in the blue-smocked crowd of little children in the homes for the friendless, and when I know

that these are typical institutions of which there are many glorifying the unselfish and generous life of city men and women—then I know there is a subsoil of love out of which true civic greatness may grow. When these flowers of deep human love have bloomed so generously in the life of a city, we are not surprised to know that other things are happening that are sure passports to civic greatness.

One is not surprised to learn that when, years ago, the dream of Theodore Thomas for a great symphony orchestra was about to dissolve through financial difficulties that 8,850 people came forward with contributions and made the Chicago Symphony Orchestra one of the permanent institutions in the higher life of that city. Art Galleries are a flower native to the soil of civic unselfishness. What a glory rests upon the names of founders and benefactors of those serving institutions that are lifting rich and poor out of the drab monotony of today into a world of beauty and spiritual reality cheering them on their way. In the unfolding purposes of human service there is a sure pathway leading on to genuine civic greatness.

There is a fourth footing for the foundation of greatness of a city. A genuine, vital church life well sustained, pouring into the total life of the city a steady stream of spiritual power and holding high amidst the stress of commercial life the ideals of Jesus, is a supreme requisite for permanent great-

ness of any city. I am above prejudice in my opinion on this subject. This is not the voice of sectarianism. This is not saying that the Kingdom of God includes only and exclusively members of the Church. It is not a claim that all moral motives originate in and all moral goals issue from the Church. It is to say that no group of people can achieve permanent greatness unless there be kept fresh and outflowing, like perennial streams that gladden the land, these fountains of spirituality called churches. There is nothing in human society doing the work they do. There is nothing prepared in spirit and program to do the work they do. Humanity, with all its sins and sorrows, with its moral defects and delinquencies, waits for the healing and help of its gentle hands. Men find here the kind of help they get nowhere else. I have been at the bedside of too many dying men in the great city and heard the last whispered prayer of too many pilgrims of the night, as they set forth to the land of eternal day, to have anyone tell me there is a satisfying substitute for the Church of Christ and its message of hope and immortality. Fraternity is a glorious virtue and life would be gloomy without it, but it has not a remedy in itself for the sore conscience, no cleansing prescription for the taint in a soul, no balm of healing for the broken heart.

Civic virtues die when churches die. Morals and ethics pass when religious centres let the fire

on their altars grow cold. Patriotism lives in men's hearts close by religion. Good order comes from our keeping the house of God in order. What a responsibility for making a city great! It rests here and now upon church people. Some citizens of the city have turned their backs upon the Church. This, they cannot afford to do; they have broken faith with Him who wept over the city, and they pay no heed to His Church! Then they wonder why their high school boys and girls go wrong? Why young men take money that does not belong to them? Why lawless people flaunt the constitution of the United States? Unless citizens of the city do their part to keep fresh and outflowing these God-given fountains of religion, our democracy is doomed. We must build the moral character of the generation in order to build the city and the state and the nation on lines that are noble and great and with a character that will abide.

There is something in the city that calls to the best in us and we must respond. We hear that something above the din and clamour of its markets.

*"Where cross the crowded ways of life,*
*Where sound the cries of race and clan,*
*Above the noise of selfish strife*
*We hear Thy voice, O Son of Man."*

# IV

# PLUS AND MINUS

*"Is thy cruse of comfort failing?*
*Rise and share it with another;*
*And through all the years of famine*
*It shall serve thee and thy brother.*

*"For the heart grows rich in giving—*
*All its wealth is living gain;*
*Seeds which mildew in the garner,*
*Scattered, fill with gold the plain."*

—SELECTED.

*"The holy Supper is kept, indeed,*
*In whatso we share with another's need:*
*Not what we give, but what we share,*
*For the gift without the giver is bare;*
*Who gives himself with his alms feeds three;*
*Himself, his hungering neighbour and Me."*

—LOWELL.

## IV

## PLUS AND MINUS

*"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."*—MATTHEW 6:33.

*"Take, therefore, the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents."*—MATTHEW 25:28.

THE help of two algebraic signs is here being invoked! It will be necessary to take them entirely out of the realm of mathematics, where they belong, and to use them as parables in the realm of spiritual things. Most men are more at home discussing the spiritual side of mathematical things than with the mystifying, perplexing side that always baffled them in the classroom.

The spiritual uses of the plus and minus signs need comment.

We need but little algebra to understand the special significance of these signs when set before figures. It makes all the difference in the world as to the part a figure plays in a group of figures whether or not it has before it the plus or the minus sign! If it be a plus sign, you have an accumulator at work in the group, a constructive, building

influence. You have something working for an aggregate by adding numerical quantities. It is a signal for tying things together and merging different and differing quantities into bigger and better unities. The minus sign is as obvious and as effective in getting results as the plus, but how different the results! Set the minus sign before a figure and disintegration and diminution start at once. Things begin to dissolve and disappear wherever that figure with its minus prefix appears. Turn loose in the society of figures a numeral with the minus sign prefixed and the cutting down and taking away process starts that whole group toward nothing. The minus sign, when its work is done, has reduced everything it touches. It takes away just as effectively as the plus can add.

There are certain moral equivalents to the plus and minus signs working in our lives. There are principles that affect our lives and characters as plus and minus affect the figures in the algebraic formula. Ascertain what is the co-efficient sign before a figure and you will know whether it is going to build up or tear down. And nothing will alter or obscure or nullify the mathematical influence of that numeral as long as it lives and wears the sign. Bury it deep as you will in a vast avalanche of figures whose totals are breath-taking and in it all and under it all is the "plussing" or "minusing."

Every man or woman in that great group-life we

call human society wears a plus or a minus sign. They exhibit the character, work the results, exert the influence in society of these algebraic prefixes. God bless and strengthen the influence of the man who is a plus! Who touches life with constructive power and going everywhere always adds to and never takes away. God save us from the disintegrating work of minus men who, like the sign, take away and tear down, who reduce and destroy.

Is there in our spiritual life a moral equivalent to the plus sign? "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added*" (Matt. 6: 33).

Here is the plus principle in daily living. With the kingdom of God in the heart, the plus process begins in life. When the kingdom of God within is recognized, men achieve the quality of life that brings to bear on all things and everybody, the plus influences! They become constructive factors in the social order—organizing, unifying, building. With their dominant purpose in being and doing, shaped by the principles of the kingdom, men become to human society what the plus sign is in the algebraic formula.

The text suggests that it is the man with a passion for the kingdom of God and God's right and just way of living, that becomes the supplementing prefix in human society. This is not the first meaning of the text of the Great Teacher. He was telling men how to find rest and equanimity. But

the other lesson is plainly there! Men that get the vision of a better world, seeing what Jesus saw, and earnestly go toward His goals with something of the yearning of His heart and indomitable purpose, are always the constructive, upbuilding, inspiring factors in the world. They add. They make for totals and a great oneness. They work toward unity and solidarity. Their goal is brotherhood. Whether their influence be limited to a church or a community or a nation or a world, the *plus* effect of their living is the same. In the plus principle we find the thing for which we are looking. We need people who can hold things together and make their lives and their personalities constructive and saving influences.

Joshua B. Garrett taught Greek in Hanover College for more than sixty years. He loved Greek and knew it as one knows his mother tongue. He loved the classroom and the art of teaching. But above all he was one of the few men of my youth that I felt thought supremely of the kingdom of God and His righteousness. He became a plus in every boy's life for the sixty years he taught. Hundreds of men all over the world in useful occupations testify today to the upbuilding and solidifying influences that were set to work in their lives through the life of this beloved teacher of Greek who was a passionate lover of the kingdom of God and its righteousness.

Frances Willard was a plus power that has

wrought, for forty years, in American society and around the world. She has done more to change the moral tastes of people and set into life temperance ideals than perhaps any other personality. She had a passion for the kingdom of God; it took her outside of the comforts of her church and the home and into the purlieus of sin and set against her the virulent opposition of wicked men. The same was true of Booker T. Washington, and Dr. Packard of Persia, and scores of other men and women in our own country and across the world who are today seeking supremely the kingdom of God! Loving God and His kingdom, supremely seeking it by every impulse and program possible, you become a plus influence in life. God will add to your joy and peace while you add to the peace and power of others.

But what about making unfavourable use of the minus sign? Is this innocent sign a symbol of moral weakness? There is a moral equivalent of the minus sign that opposes the moral equivalent of the plus sign.

"*Take, therefore, the talent from him*" (Matt. 25: 28).

The minus principle in the moral world is the thing that subtracts and diminishes. It is exhibited at work in the parable of the talents from which the second text is taken! The plus men in the parable were honoured with public plaudits. They added to the trust funds in hand by faithfulness

and judicious investment. The selfish inert man who thought so much of his own comfort and ease that he chose to take no chance, was a *minus* sign in the day of reckoning. He always has been and always will be! Selfishness is the moral equivalent to the minus sign in any man's life! Do you know one single monument selfishness has ever erected? A selfish man, wherever he is, whatever he does, like the figure with a minus prefix in a welter of figures, is slowly at work undermining the foundation of society. He always works on the minus side, subtracting and taking away!

What is the matter with so many of the peace diplomats and conference leaders that sit at world councils? What is the matter with the little nations of Eastern Europe? Many a leader at these so-called peace tables is branded with the minus sign on his heart. The futile deliberations and the economic and political calamities that have followed these conferences are due to the baleful influence of that minus sign working in the lives of selfish nations. They seek to take away and not to build up. They wish to get but not to give. And if their greed be not modified by a mutuality born of a sense of interdependence they will break into fragments the solidarity of Europe.

What has been the matter with certain men in business who have lost their place of leadership in business and their standing in society? Selfishness placed the minus sign before their lives and in the

working of the program of the minus sign, self-destruction followed! Pity those prosperous men whose lives have crumpled up and failed because they did the bidding of the wrong sign!

In this problem of the signs at work in human life, is there any solution? Yes!

Jesus reversed the minus sign and made it an active plus sign. He changed its whole content, character, and practical consequence. He stopped its subtracting power and started it adding. He took the facts of human experience and contradicted all the laws of mathematics when He said, "*He that saveth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake and the gospel, shall find it*" (Matt. 16: 25). Thus the minus sign may become a plus.

The selfish heart, a subtracting and diminishing influence, becomes a plus power when it is possessed by that unselfishness that took Christ through life, sacrificing, deducting, foregoing for others, coming in a supreme act of self-abnegation to the Cross. Greed dies in men's life when once and truly they see that Cross and know its meaning! Our minus lives may be changed and glorified into the plus! There is to be no saving of the world, no stability of the social order, no progress in government, no prosperity in business till we can drive out the minus influences of greed and selfishness that pervert and unspiritualize men's lives and destroy that unity and solidarity of life by

which alone progress is to be found. Jesus was the world's supreme plus sign. Unknowing men that never saw anything they could call gain outside of their ledgers or beyond their thrones or above their armies, thought Him and His plan all minus. They scorned His teaching, ridiculed His ideals and crucified Him on a cross, and said, " the plus abides with spears and crowns and golden palaces." But all their empires fell apart and their military power melted away. The names of their great ones are simply symbols of presumption and futility and bitter disillusionment, while His Name is the Name above every name. When His love fills our hearts, then are altered the subtracting and belittling things that work to hurt and hinder the world. Then we know the thing that brings joy and power into life and the thing that enriches and sustains. We need in everything the proper prefix to our living that our character in all things may be constructive and upbuilding.

# V

# COMRADES OF THE SHINING PLATEAU

*"O Master, let me walk with thee*
*In lowly paths of service free;*
*Tell me thy secret, help me bear*
*The strain of toil, the fret of care.*

* * * * *

*Teach me thy patience! Still with thee*
*In closer, dearer company;*
*In work that keeps faith sweet and strong,*
*In trust that triumphs over wrong."*

—WASHINGTON GLADDEN.

*"What happy secret fountain,*
*Fair shade or mountain,*
*Whose undiscovered virgin glory*
*Boasts it this day, though not in story.*
*Was then thy dwelling? Did some cloud*
*Fix'd to a tent, descend and shroud*
*My distres't Lord? Or did a star,*
*Beckoned by Thee, though high and far,*
*In sparkling smiles haste gladly down*
*To lodge light and increase her own?*
*My dear, dear God! I do not know*
*What lodged thee then, nor where, nor how:*
*But I am sure thou now dost come*
*Oft to a narrow homely room,*
*Where thou, too, hast but the least part,*
*My God, I mean my sinful heart."*

—HENRY VAUGHAN.

# V

## COMRADES OF THE SHINING PLATEAU

*"And after six days, Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves; and he was transfigured before them. . . . And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him."*—MARK 9:2-7.

*"And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; and wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not."*—MARK 9:17-18.

HERE is a story in two parts. The first part has to do with a glorious spiritual experience on the mountain-top. The second part has to do with the sad failure of men to make proper use of that spiritual experience for the use of needy suffering fellows in the valley. The first part reveals the privileges that belong to discipleship when it detaches itself from earthly things and enters into divine comradeship with Jesus. The second part reveals the deficient understanding and ineffective faith that make for the failure of those who have been on the mountain-top. The first part shows how this drab,

everyday living of ours may be saturated with spiritual joys and divine contentment when its fellowship is on the supreme levels and with heavenly company. The second part shows how the ecstasy and spiritual exaltation of the mountain-top may ooze and fail of practical help in the presence of emergencies when human forgetfulness and selfish spirit have done their work.

Let us first go to the mountain-top. Here all is radiant and full of peace and joy. The "mountain-top" is a metaphorical phrase for happy spiritual experience; for the glad, deep reactions of religion in the heart. We think of the mountain-top as a level on which certain glorious realities of our religious life are set in the clearest possible atmosphere. Here the visibility is fine. Spiritual realities are so vivid that they are indisputable and reassuring as we see them in the clear, brilliant air of the lofty altitude. Looking toward the great things of God and the spirit life we say with new emphasis, "Now I see! I know! I feel! I am convinced! My doubts are gone! My faith is tuned again and religion seems definite and worthwhile!" All this is true because we are on the clear, high levels. We have risen above the fogs of the low-lying valleys.

It must be acknowledged that there are some realities of religion that Christ's own disciples do not see because of the machinery and the apparatus, the programs and organization technique

they insist on taking into the mountain-top. They are anxious to be efficient. They so earnestly desire to see the good expand that they clutter up the mountain-top with headquarters' paraphernalia. There are so many practical outfits and so much general equipment and agency material for doing things that we obscure the transfigured faces of our Lord and His heavenly companions and drown the voices of the mountain-top conferees by our machinery. We are so busy and noisy, hurrying about and giving orders as to the little transitory human booths that must, in our opinion, be set up, that the great voice of God Himself, with a message that would melt the world into oneness in Him, falls dead upon our ears.

Look athwart that shining plateau at this moment. At this high level spiritual vision is clear. All anxiety as to machinery is for the moment profane and futile. One must here detach himself from the buzzing order of the day. Closing one's ears to controversies and debate, let us take the rewards of the glorious sunlit quietude of the mountain-top. What is it that there is visible?

*Jesus!* His face aglow with a divine light that is the badge of His ineffable divinity. Divine personality overlays those human features with such a glory as eyes have never seen. What a sight for timid, half-believing disciples! What an unveiling of infinite purposes! What do we need to see more truly than this shining face? We have nearly lost

sight of Jesus in the trappings of the organizations we have set up to do Him honour. We have had our gaze turned from the simple, glorious character of Jesus toward definitions and descriptions and deductions about Jesus. We have argued and philosophized and exhorted, when what we need is simply to look directly and uninterruptedly at Jesus.

*"No fable old, nor mythic lore,*
*Nor dream of bards and seers,*
*No dead fact stranded on the shore*
*Of the oblivious years.*

*"But warm, sweet, tender, even yet*
*A present help is He:*
*And faith has still its Olivet,*
*And love its Galilee."*

Spiritual companionship! Something a chilly world does not afford. Many people are lonely for spiritual companionship but do not know what the trouble is. They purposely distract their minds by all kinds of activities. The pain of unrest spoils their good purposes, and the heart knows no rest. The fellowship on the mountain-top is the supreme corrective for worldly loneliness and for that restlessness that disturbs our jaded souls. On that mountain-top there proceeded a conversation that dealt with the eternal purposes of God and their human connections in time. The vocabulary and whole personal intercourse of those heavenly con-

versationalists was saturated with spirituality and divine grace and a great tidal wave of peace from the undisturbed sea of eternity rolled over that mountain-top. When we talk of fleeting, trivial, earthly things exclusively, preventing the consideration of great themes of God and the serious purposes of immortal living, a loneliness like some spiritual blight falls upon us. We need mountain-top comradeship and conversation to keep us glad and going Godward in our thoughts and life work.

Confirmation of faith as an active process was being realized on that mountain-top. Those human comrades of the shining plateau took doubts and spiritual deficits with them into this interview. They were slow in concluding about the great features of Christ's character and mission. He did not altogether look the part of the Messianic hero they had pictured. He made small pretensions. His ideal was in opposition to an imperialistic restoration of David's throne. His chief intimacies were with common ordinary people and He met violent hostilities from the rich and great. These seekers after truth who are to lead the cause of Christ need confirmation of their faith. They need convictions that are rooted. They want certitude laid on foundations of faith that cannot be shaken by the storms that are coming. They must be rock-ribbed and ironbound lest they wreck the faith about to be delivered to them for the Church of the centuries!

It was the spiritual experience of the mountain-top they were waiting for. Nothing renews the footings of faith under men in a world of doubt and uncertainty like finding the levels where vision is clear and the voice of God is audible. Alone with Him in the shining clouds of heavenly fellowship, where the conversations run on great themes and where the comrades are men of the ages and the glow of spirituality falls over all like the golden cloud that covers God's throne—this is the mountain-top seclusion weary men need. Abide there for a season, and when you walk down there will be arguments written in your heart against which the gates of hell cannot prevail. We need these mountain-top experiences that stamp indelible impressions upon our souls. We need them more than intellectual arguments or coercive exhortations that convince but do not convert nor hold us when the sound of earnest speaking has died away.

On the mountain with Jesus and a spiritual companionship and a great voice of reassurance and confirmation, is where discipleship gets its power. Here is where, and this is how, the intellect is set on fire, the soul is charged with pentecostal energy till it becomes as a spiritual dynamo thrilling everything that makes contact with it. Congregations and church officers should take to the shining plateau. They have much to do, but all haste, waste and hurry is a halting and hindering of God's work if there be not first a very definite dwelling

on the mountain-top with its divine companions and conversation.

It is to be regretted that there is a second part to the picture. These mountain-top disciples must go down. Some rare souls seem not to realize this. They live on the high levels of spiritual peace and joy. They let nothing interfere with their prolonged rest in the Lord! They love to sit at His feet. They love the sunshine of His face and linger in it, come what will, call what may. Rudyard Kipling has such disciples in mind when he draws a contrast between the sons of Mary and of Martha.

*"And the Sons of Mary smile and are blessèd—*
*they know the angels are on their side.*
*They know in them is the Grace confessèd, and*
*for them are the Mercies multiplied.*
*They sit at the Feet—they hear the Word—they*
*see how truly the Promise runs;*
*They have cast their burden upon the Lord, and*
*—the Lord He lays it on Martha's Sons!"*

The disciples of the shining plateau went down. There was at the foot of the mountain a distressed father with a sick child waiting to be helped. The transcendent scenes have shifted—this is life. The incident seems so disturbing in contrast with the lovely quietude of the mount. Why does the father make a public matter of his family affliction? Why bring a note of melancholy and discord into the harmony of the beautiful comradeship, the memory of which is yet fresh and sweet? Does not he know

that they have been talking with heavenly visitors? And more, that they have just come from a season of religious exaltation in which the voice of God spoke wonderful things? It seems like selfishness on the part of this insistent father to press the claims of his suffering epileptic boy upon the attention of spiritually-minded men who are so thrilled, so near to God, so exalted in their experience!

But the tragic feature of the story is that these disciples seem to have left behind the power that blessed them on the mountain-top. They are not spiritually able to meet the emergency, though they seem to have the disposition. Here is a tragic breakdown in a logical sequence. What is the worth of a mountain-top experience if there be no transmission to the vales below? The thing we found on the high levels must be brought down into daily life, where people work and wait and want. The supreme test of the genuineness of our religion is not on the mountain-top but in the valley. Will that glorious thing that thrilled us in the quiet mountain, where we saw and felt the presence of God and heard His voice, work down here where children are sick, parents anxious and evil things are always in sight? This is where it does work. Men who have really seen the transfigured face of Jesus are the ones who make it work. Those who know the company of heavenly men and have heard the voice of God are those who insist on working it.

We have been asked to come up into the moun-

tain that we may know the peace, joy and power that fellowship there makes possible. Now, we are asked to come down to this sin-sick and disturbed world with its acute needs. We are to bring with us all the sweetness and joy and spiritual power that the high and quiet levels made possible. Let us carry in our hearts, like a conquering memory, what we saw and heard and felt, and allow nothing to spoil our peace nor mar the taste of that fellowship. Let us save to our hearts for the stress and struggle of the valley all these precious experiences born of the upper altitudes.

Let us keep this wonderful power that fills men's souls and thrills their lives through long years of hardship and service. It was the memories of the mountain-top that sent Blanche Wilson Stead a martyr missionary on the plains of Persia through the long labours and painful years of sacrificial service for the Kurds and mountain barbarians she so loved. Her face lighted with a smile of joy even amidst the privations of her missionary life and even as she breathed her last breath, because she was sharing her "mountain-top" joys with her poor Persian people. It was the memory of the mountain-top of his spiritual experiences in Christ which he found with Henry Drummond that took Dr. Grenfell from a city practice with preferments and honours awaiting him, and sent him to the sordid lives, sick bodies and burdened souls of Labrador folks. It was the things he saw and felt

on the quiet upper levels of his faith that sent David Livingstone, the pathmaker, through the impossible jungle of Africa with his message of hope to the most helpless race of the world. It is the unforgettable memory of these experiences of the heart that has sent hundreds of young men and women to the uttermost parts of the earth as light-bearers in the darkness. We keep that which comes in seasons of sweet fellowship with Him only by seeking to share it with others. Our power lies in the hills—from it we draw. Down here is where our duty calls and to it we respond.

# VI

# SPRINGTIME IN THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM

*"Not a brooklet floweth*
*Onward to the sea,*
*Not a sunbeam gloweth*
*On its bosom free,*
*Not a seed unfoldeth*
*To the glorious air,*
*But our Father holdeth*
*It within His care.*

*"Not a floweret fadeth,*
*Not a star grows dim,*
*Not a cloud o'ershadeth*
*But 'tis marked by Him.*
*Dream not that thy gladness*
*God doth fail to see;*
*Think not in thy sadness*
*He forgetteth thee.*

*"Power eternal resteth*
*In His changeless hand;*
*Love immortal hasteth*
*Swift at His command.*
*Faith can firmly trust Him*
*In the darkest hour,*
*For the keys she holdeth*
*To His love and power."*

—SELECTED.

# VI

## SPRINGTIME IN THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM

*"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."*—PSALM 23.

IT is always springtime in the Twenty-third Psalm. One never detects the chill of winter nor the drab colours of the autumn nor the parchedness of summer in this Psalm. They are not features of the calendar nor items of the landscape that this Psalm knows anything about. The colours here painted are natural and living because they are painted by an artist who knew the sheen and the shape and the sweet odours of the original. He gathered the beauty from the spring-green hillsides and grass-crowned ridges of his native land and

wrote them into his Psalms. He walked by the rare but quiet pools under the brow of the hills and felt the spell of rest and calm. The refreshing breath of the morning, out of the dew-drenched valleys, poured out upon him and modified the burning heat of the noon sun that was scorching the earth. These things he saw and felt as he wrote his Psalm.

Inimitable touches of beauty with exquisite vistas opening into the charms of nature exposed in these wonderful Psalms have been lost to us because we sought here always and only the vocabulary of devotion to which we are accustomed. We are apt to think God must be approached in a certain, stereotyped way and that one devotional pathway to Him must be the same for us all. Before we are aware of it we are often using certain lifeless and encrusted forms of speech, out of which, so far as we are concerned, vitality and personal meaning have gone. We become matter-of-fact at the Throne of Grace, our petitions falling into sacred formalities which custom has approved, whether or not they release for us a single heart-hunger or kindle a satisfying emotion or present a single request that deeply we yearn for.

At no place in the varied and precious spiritual experiences of God's people is there such a high call for the imagination as in the hours of prayer. When men pray they walk into the realms of golden mystery where indefinable realities lie large and

sure all about them. Men, therefore, must carry with them into this tremulous atmosphere, into this twilight of their praying times, the glowing light and the outreaching hand of a sanctified imagination. We make a mistake, seriously and spiritually hurtful, not so to do. The imagination of an oriental Psalmist kneeling in prayer, made the dull, gray things of the outer world beautiful and significant. They breathed forth upon him a spiritual air. God lived within him in a heaven-given companionship. The mystic gates of a vital faith stood wide when the Psalmist prayed. Through them he walked, seeing invisible things, rejoicing in a spiritual loveliness that others did not see and hearing voices that others failed to hear.

In the Twenty-third Psalm the inspired and praying man gives his imagination large liberty. He thinks of himself as a sheep with all the ordinary characteristics of a sheep, viz.: a sense of dependence, a yearning for leadership, a love of green grass, a joy in the nearness of still waters and the tranquillity that abides in the seasons of rest in the pastures. But the imagining of this praying moment would strike us as being gross and low if all it did was to portray the Psalmist to himself as a sheep. Thinking up to this point and then stopping, provides no stimulating, spiritual reaction. The nobler levels of imagination of this praying Psalmist are reached when he imagines God a shepherd.

This was a daring leap of the inspired imagination due to the moving of God's spirit upon the Psalmist. It was an epoch-making revelation. The world was waiting for a better, truer interpretation of God. Here was the culminating peak in his thought of God's love and care of His people. What a shepherd did for his flocks on the hills of Judæa in the winter nights and in the grazing season, when grass was scarce and water rare, and in the hours of peril when robbers hovered near or wolves howled in the shadows, what he, a shepherd, did under these various circumstances for his flock; that God, in His spiritual oversight, did for him. Kneeling to pray and looking up into the Syrian sky strewn with white stars that lay like his own sheep in some vast field of the night, the Psalmist saw God shepherding him. A great flood of tenderness poured out from God's own heart when the Psalmist let his imagination picture Almighty God, maker of heaven and earth, as his shepherd.

Interpreting God in the terms of the shepherd, the praying man's imagination, like the doorkeeper of the soul that it is, opened and let in the whole field of shepherding activity. Herein he found a new and comforting understanding of God. It was a revealing moment that illumined the theology of the praying writer. For a man to have arrived at such a conception of God was a transcendent spiritual experience. At the heart of this praying affirmation is the idea that God is a shepherd rather

than an imperial despot. In His shepherding care He is a safe guide, a bountiful provider and dependable keeper, capable of doing in love and in gentleness what the shepherd on the plains does for his sheep.

It is the springtime atmosphere of this Psalm that is claiming our attention. The chief mark of the springtime everywhere is the " green pastures " that lay so fair and sweet in the holy imagination of this praying man. God, even then, was leading him through their beauty and verdure, and his soul burst into song in the lines of this immortal hymn of spiritual rest and satisfaction—" The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." It is the " green pastures " that always suggest God's shepherding care. This is the preëminence of every springtime.

A green pasture is no ordinary sight. It leads the reverential man Godward. Look at it, coming again out of the brown deadness of the winter. It is the same glad surprise. The same fresh, unexpected but ever longed-for miracle. The landscape slowly warms under the meagre sun. Weary of winter, we look across the grey bleakness of the hills and wonder when the life we know is hidden there, will rise again and fling its beauty over the harsh wounds left by the snow and ice. The bluebird, like an electric spark, darts here and there, advising impatient men and women of the reasonableness of their expectancy as to grass. Other omens of spring-life are in the air. Then a warm

shower, a day of unbroken sunshine and a strange, thin veil of green comes upon the earth. Thin as some gauzy mist, it fails to obscure the dull colours of winter, but when other days and steadier warmth follow then deeper shades of green are spread on hill slopes and through the tree-tops and men begin to forget that winter ever was. Then the fields awake and the whole face of the world changes. The tide of grass, for which we have waited, sweeps over the land like some vast sea of verdant beauty.

"God is here again," we say. Yet He is no more here in the green grass than in the cold, dead soil of the frozen field. But the green, growing grass kindles our imagination and gives to God's power and love a reality that we fail to appreciate in the mystery of winter's deadness. Spring visualizes God in action before us in a spectacle whose meaning and power we feel. He talks more plainly through the living grass than the dead earth. We are more alive to His whispering and open larger capacities and perceptions in the green pastures than in the snowy widths of wintertime. The late Madison Cawein had a soul attuned to all the beauties of the world; he expressed the feelings of every nature lover when he said:

*"There is no rhyme that is half so sweet*
*As the song of the wind in the rippling wheat;*
*There is no meter that's half so fine*
*As the lilt of the brook under rock and vine;*

*And the loveliest lyric I ever heard*
*Was the wildwood strain of a forest bird.*
*If the wind and the brook and the bird would teach*
*My heart their beautiful parts of speech,*
*And the natural art that they say these with,*
*My soul would sing of beauty and myth*
*In a rhyme and meter that none before*
*Have sung in their love, or dreamed in their lore,*
*And the world would be richer, one poet the more."*

The serenity of a life was also suggested to the Psalmist by "green pastures." He lies down amidst vernal beauty and his heart is at rest. He finds a balm of healing for his irritated and perplexed soul as he lies down in the green grass. The healing virtue is not in the grass, beguiling as it may be, with all its beauty. There is no medicine for helping his hurt spirit in the chemistry of the grass. The medicinal help for his soul comes from his finding that God has not only made the grass and laid on its colours and spread it tapestry-wise over all the hills, but He has made it for the resting-place of His children. Where grass is, God's presence and power are, and peace must live in the hearts of His children.

The shepherding of God does not explain the grass. That belongs to His achievements as a Creator. The shepherding goes with the Psalmist's lying down in the grass with a sense of peace coming into his heart through a feeling of God's love and nearness to him, as the pasture's grass, like a book of a thousand leaves, voices it to him.

Every blade sings of God's care. Every green pathway athwart the hills and fields leads to His heart, every valley of verdure tells that He has walked that way, the rich growing meadows where cattle feed bespeak Him, the highly-coloured margins of streams trace His handiwork. Mountain-sides, rolling plains, trackless prairies, all speak of God's goodness and care. Whether it be the tiny blade fighting for air and sun in the foul shades in the unfertile soil of some slum alley or the green growth of vast pasture lands of the west, grass tells the same story of the Great Shepherd's shepherding.

The message of eternal springtime in this Psalm, so familiar as to seem threadbare, should speak a new lesson of peace and spiritual serenity. Looking at the green earth, through the atmosphere of this interpreting Psalm, a new joy in the Shepherd's provision for His sheep takes hold of the heart. Men should grow less self-assertive and less materialistic in their souls as the springs come and go. Walking under the Shepherd's care one always finds the eternally green pasture-land, and, calmed by His voice, the weary lie down and are at peace.

# VII

# A RADIATING PERSONALITY

*"Not in robes of purple splendour, nor in silken softness shod,*
*But in raiment worn with travel came their God,*
*And the people knew His presence by the heart that ceased to sigh,*
*When the glory of the Lord was passing by.*

*"For He healed the sick at even, and He cured the lepers sore,*
*And sinful men and women sinned no more,*
*And the world grew mirthful-hearted and forgot its misery*
*When the glory of the Lord was passing by."*

—W. J. Dawson.

*"I do not see how we can make sense of Christ's words and believe them true, unless we have, at least vaguely, in our minds, the permeable structure by which I picture our love in its relation to God, a structure such that love freely given to any of the children of men must, at the same time, pass through him to his Maker. Unless the whole structure of divine and human love is thus permeable, I cannot understand how our human love and our worship, our love of nature and of country, of work, of play and of God can mingle and reinforce each other as they do. Furthermore, unless we think of our own personality in such relation to Infinite Personality as I have hinted, I do not see how any sociable human being can bear, without intolerable humiliation, the volume of affection and gratitude that is poured upon him. In practice one explains it, one makes it sweet and sane, only by passing it on."*—Richard C. Cabot, M.D.

## VII

## A RADIATING PERSONALITY

*"Ye are the light of the world."*—MATTHEW 5:14.

THE metallurgists and chemists of the present day all agree that among the baffling metals of the earth none is more baffling than radium. One need be neither a metallurgist nor a chemist to know enough of this miracle-working metal to make illustrative use of it in attempting to answer a very important question. The question is, "*what constitutes the active elements in that most radiating thing the world ever saw, viz.: human personality?*"

Little by little, great physicists like Becquerel, Rutherford, Schmidt, and notably Madame Curie, discovered a strange new form of energy they called radioactivity. It belongs to certain metals like uranium, thorium, actinium, and specially to radium. Of this power-filled group of metals, radium is the king. A profound secret of nature till 1895.

Radium pours forth a stream of phosphorescent energy so potent and complex that it immediately breaks successively into eight other different kinds

of energies. Each emanation of energy that breaks forth is more powerful than the original emanation out of which it came. For instance, the Gamma Ray, which is the third stream to break off, is one hundred thousand times more powerful than the ray out of which it comes.

Out of a ton of pitchblende, a rock from the Colorado mountains, we get just about enough radium to hold on the point of a needle. Yet so active and eager is this dynamic metal that this load on the needle-point pours forth, as in a tiny Niagara, sixty-two million phosphorescent particles every second of its existence. And so rich in power is this energetic, light-bearing, heat-making radium that it is practically inexhaustible in its radiating power. Its light seems never to go out, its power never to slacken, its radiation never to halt. Of course, every spark that radiates does represent the wreckage of some particle of matter or the combustion of some infinitesimal globule of gas, yet after that tiny bit of radium on the point of a needle has been pouring forth its fiery ardour for three hundred years, its mass will have been reduced but one-half and the power of the remnant will remain unabated! It will go on for thirteen hundred more years radiating its starry brightness, coating other bodies with light, clothing other bits of matter with power, healing diseased tissue and pouring its benign heat waves into the cold and cheerless earth! Such energy the world hitherto

had never heard of! Such power is beyond the dreams of imagination! This is radium!

Because radium liberates into life such exhaustless streams of energy and touches with phosphorescence and power everything that comes into the zone of its contact, this metal serves as an illustration of that radiating, dynamic thing we call human personality. Here is a helpful analogy that we may keep in mind while talking about those things that make personality radiant and pervasive. When Jesus said to His disciples, "Let your light so shine," He had in mind the active energy that lives in, and pours forth from, a moral character. He had in mind the spiritual influences that radiate into life with as much reality as do the phosphorescent stars of radium, touching with their contagious light and power all about them.

We shall take for granted one or two things. First, that personality which cannot be defined with classroom accuracy is simply the sum total of everything that a man is, fused into oneness and charged with a spiritual radioactivity that pours forth ceaselessly. Personality is something that we recognize long before we can analyze or define. It is the total qualities and traits of the whole man unified and spiritualized and pouring forth a current of spiritual power that is just as real and dynamic in its touch as the green fire of radium.

Personality is an atmospheric thing that comes from within. Personality is not brains, nor golden

eloquence, nor geniality, nor willpower, nor fine features, nor good manners, nor harmless disposition, nor vast stores of knowledge, nor rigid personal discipline, it is not any *one* of these things, nor *all* of them combined. These qualities might be in the possession of an individual and yet that individual lack the something needed to fuse them together and thus release into life that spiritualized energy which corresponds to the radioactivity that pours forth from radium like a shower of golden stars. It is not what we add to the exterior that makes personality. It is not what we gather from without and store away within that makes personality. It is that which we have within, unified under the heat of our own experience, organized under the control of our own wisdom and directed by the pressure of unselfish considerations, that becomes dynamic and contagious with that winsome power that all men recognize. Homely men have it, unbeautiful women have it, eccentric people have it. Unlettered people have it.

What is this active element in personality that seems not conditioned by external things? That is the question to be answered.

Everybody wants to locate that particular thing that guarantees a radiating personality. Business men want it. Salesmen on the street want it. Teachers want it. Society women want it. Leaders in every realm of life are asking what that contagious and quickening element is,

that makes personality vital and power-giving. What is it?

The vitalizing, animating thing in human personality is *enthusiasm*. This, in itself, needs to be explained and its cause assigned. Enthusiasm has more to do with human personality in making it effective than any other thing. *Enthusiasm* is a keen delight in what you *are,* in what you *say,* in what you *do,* and in *what comes* to you in life. Enthusiasm is a deep joy in living, that fills your words with power, lights your face with smiles and makes the touch of your personality a thrilling experience. There are business men dead at their desks, preachers dead in the pulpit. Women dead in their households. Scholars dead in school. Not literally physically dead, but living so completely without spirit or joy or vigour in their lives that they quicken and arouse no one they touch any more than those who have ceased to live. They are dead! Personality is suppressed! Its energy is throttled. Its current is grounded! There may be physical equipment and mental gifts and accessories of various sorts, the very things out of which personality could make a masterpiece of high-powered human character, but that eager, alert, responsive something that ought to leap forth and touch you and compel you is passive, inert, dead.

Oh, the dried, empty wells of enthusiasm! Here is the explanation of the pathetic story of how men and women have become dead and withered and

utterly useless in life. There is a reason. The world wants joy and ardour, wants happiness and hope in those whom it is asked to follow. The reason leaders are uncrowned and dethroned and men of power lose their sceptres is because they ceased to take life joyously. They ceased to greet its changes and responsibilities and problems with enthusiasm. They die in heart life. They should listen to Browning when he says in "Rabbi Ben Ezra":

*"Then welcome each rebuff*
*That turns each smoothness rough,*
*Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!*
*Be our joys three-parts pain!*
*Strive, and hold cheap the strain;*
*Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge*
*the throe!"*

Now, in order to keep full the springs of enthusiasm and thus keep the power of personality at its maximum, let the following suggestions be kept in mind:

Where does this spiritual radium get its glow? How is the wonderful phosphorescence of the heart born and how is this spiritual fire in the soul replenished out from inexhaustible supplies? Can we be assured of a continuous stream of this fine energy and winsome power from within? That is the question. Here is the answer:

Lay into a man's soul certain great, unchanging facts that become a part of his spiritual makeup

and put his life into the grip of certain great conceptions of truth and duty and you've started the phosphorescence and power. There are certain great convictions that kindle the central fires in men. They cause personality to overflow. They start spiritual radiation. It was the presence of big, gripping ideas in his heart that set Lincoln's soul on fire. It was the heat and glow of the deep things in D. L. Moody's heart that started a spiritual conflagration in his life and eventually throughout the world. It was the moral passion, born of great principles wrought into his soul, that made Theodore Roosevelt the powerful personality that he was. All radiation is born of inward heat. Here are certain truths that put the fires under personality:

A right view of your moral responsibility in the world.

A proper outlook on life.

A true estimate of man.

A keen sense of the reality of the spiritual life.

There is no spiritual radiation where these power-giving ideas are wanting.

Life takes on great meaning for any man when he recognizes his place in relation to God and the moral order. He arises at once far above the level of the creation to which he physically belongs and becomes a sharer with God in traits of character and in moral responsibility. Let any man deny his moral responsibility in this world or the next and

refuse to accept any responsibility for his decisions and character, and you have a dangerous moral anarchist in the realm of human living and conduct. He is a disquieting factor in any of life's relations. A man out of harmony with the moral order and going it alone on lines of his own selfish determination is like a planet that has jumped its orbit. It has become a wild, lawless, perilous thing. Disaster is certain and soon. Men never glow with any kind of moral power if they fail to find and acknowledge definitely their place in the world of right living and clearly accept responsibility in the matter of moral conduct.

If a man sees behind every decent municipal ordinance, every fair legislative statute, every constitutional amendment, every code of right living, the holy sanction that comes from its relation to a supreme moral order, he has a new enthusiasm and a stronger purpose in living up to the last letter of every law of the realm. Lawless men are godless men. They set themselves against the universe. They see no roots to these laws setting deep in the soil of infinite rightness. It is our personal relation to God and our responsibility to Him as the seat and centre of moral order that puts joy and fire and persistency into our purposes to meet the demands of righteousness. This works to put a radiant glow into our personality. You co-operate with every police department in the world and reinforce the efforts of every law and order league in ex-

istence when you persuade men to find their place and take their responsibility in the moral order. Let a man get out from under a sense of moral responsibility, let life free itself from all inward coercion, feel no moral urge, no sense of accountability, and a man's motive power in the direction of all good is gone. He may be a bandit or a burglar. He has no chart, no compass, no port. He is a dangerous derelict on the sea of life! To feed the moral fires in the soul you must get a right notion of your place in the moral order.

A proper outlook on life makes for spiritual radiation, for sustained enthusiasm is personality. Tell me how a man looks at life and I can tell you what his personality and character mean to his generation. It depends on the way you look at life and what you see when you do look, whether your personality is a spiritual blight that withers and depresses all it touches, or whether it thrills men with hopes of better and nobler things. The trouble with the political leaders of Russia's revolution was that they looked out on life and saw nothing but a struggle for economic equality. Life was but a tragic battle for existence that had to be gone through with. Its supreme achievement was to be reached through a victorious class struggle in which, finally, every man without regard to deserts shared equally with every other man, the food, the clothes, the music, the art that are in the world. Life is at a sad, low level when this view obtains.

Some of our own literary men apparently look on life as a drab, dreary procession of personal experiences moving on the lower levels, knowing nothing of sunlit mountain-tops or fruitful plains. If life were nothing more than "Main Street" portrays, existence truly would be melancholy and futile. Contrast the personal experience and ideals of life in "Main Street" with life as revealed in "The Americanization of Edward Bok," or the "Letters of Walter Hines Page," the "Life of Florence Nightingale," or the "Life of Booker T. Washington"—or the "Book of Isaiah," or Paul's "Letter to the Philippians."

The outgoing power in its soul and the range and quality of that power depend upon how you look at life. Lord Tennyson said to the thoughtless, trivial men of his day who were using life for fun and money-making and the getting of power:

> *"Life is not an idle ore;*
> *But iron dug from central gloom*
> *And heated hot with burning fears,*
> *And dipt in baths of hissing tears*
> *And battered with the strokes of Doom*
> *To shape and use."*

Till men feel the urge that our Lord felt when He said, "I must work the work of him that sent me while it is day," and until they set about as did He to make every hour sacred and serious with a great purpose there will be no radiating of the soul,

no spiritual glow falling into life. No moral enthusiasm that will abide.

A true estimate of man keeps the glow within a man's soul and maintains his enthusiasm.

The world has never forgiven Robert Ingersoll and his lesser imitators who quote him, for the disparaging remark credited to him that " the more he saw of men the better he liked dogs." There was a bitter cynicism and a degraded notion of manhood in the statement that has put an additional taint on the memory of Ingersoll along with the shocking memory of his agnosticism and blasphemy. His views of man as well as his view of God disqualified him for service and leadership. People would not accept his views of man any more than they would his views of God. Old General William Booth saw humanity dwarfed and broken in the slums and vileness of London, yet the estimate of man on which he built his life's work was noble and inspiring. The more he saw of poor, deformed, blighted men the more he loved men! He saw man at his worst but not one syllable of cynicism nor despair ever escaped his lips. Why? Because he saw in men—no matter how low and disabled—the ability for something better and greater when once the golden ideals of love and life and divine grace took hold of them. When a man sees the potential image of God in the brutal features of a degraded fellow and recognizes the supreme call of brotherhood to undertake in every way, and by whatever

means available, to bring out in something of its true glory the outlines of that divine image, he has underwritten with love and hope an inspiring estimate of man.

It is what one sees as possible in men who have seen a better vision, and have turned to go toward it, that keeps our views of men right. It is what we see in men like Edward Marsden, the Esquimau of Alaska, in Chief Many Goats the Navajo, in Ding Li Mai of China, or Konamora of Japan, or Papini of Italy, or Billy Sunday of baseball fame—men who spurn the lower and lesser things of life that once engrossed them and give themselves to the higher and holier—that makes *every man,* without regard to state or station, a glorious possibility of something godlike. This keeps the glow in the soul as we live among men. Here is a secret place where permanent enthusiasm in life and work is born!

No man with the right estimate of man will use for his selfish purposes the liberty and personality of his brother. He will safeguard his physical life from long hours of grinding labour. He will reward with adequate compensation his days of toil. He will go to the ends of the earth where, in darkened jungles and beneath age-old superstitions, men are intellectually and spiritually bound, and seek to set them free. He will clasp the hand of men of all races and creeds, recognize in them children of one Father and brothers of one blood.

But, finally, we come to the most fundamental feature in making effective personality and maintaining spiritual enthusiasm in a man's life and work. A man must have a keen sense of the reality of the spiritual life. Getting hold of a well-balanced notion of life as it lies between the material and spiritual factors in it is a great achievement for any man. It will go a long way toward keeping that man straight and sane and good in all of life. Materialism has become an atmosphere in which we live. It colours all our thinking and doing. We work for material gains in order to live. Bread and meat are prime necessities. A bank account is a great comfort. A day's wage is a vital necessity. We are close to the earth. We cannot help it. Hunger and sickness and death keep us ever in proximity to material things. It is no wonder that material things hold us and hamper us. One understands how the things of time and sense, of factories and farms, of desk and mill, crowd the spiritual ideals out of men's lives. Material things are so real and urgent and necessary. But they are not supreme and final and lasting things. They pass with the using. Their urgencies soon cease. Their uses soon fail of importance. They are not finally and forever dominant. Their glories do not abide. Then what? Then comes to those who have looked for it, *the reality of invisible things.* What eye hath not seen, nor ear heard will then take the supreme and central place in the group of

things with which we deal. Spiritual values live. Virtues never die. Moral traits survive when all earthly pomp and glories pass.

*"The tumult and the shouting dies;*
*The Captains and the Kings depart:*
*Still stands thine ancient sacrifice,*
*An humble and a contrite heart.*
*Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,*
*Lest we forget—lest we forget!*

*"Far-called, our navies melt away;*
*On dune and headland sinks the fire:*
*Lo, all our pomp of yesterday*
*Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!*
*Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,*
*Lest we forget—lest we forget!"*

# VIII

# PERFECT PEACE

*"Calm me, my God, and keep me calm,*
*Soft resting on Thy breast;*
*Soothe me with holy hymn and psalm,*
*And bid my spirit rest."*

—Horatio Bonar.

*"Let us put by some hour of every day*
*For holy things!—Whether it be when dawn*
*Peers through the window pane, or when the noon*
*Flames like a burnished topaz, in the vault,*
*Or when the thrush pours in the ear of eve*
*Its plaintive melody; some little hour*
*Wherein to hold rapt converse with the soul,*
*From sordidness and self a sanctuary,*
*Swept by the winnowings of unseen wings,*
*And touched by the White Light Ineffable!"*

—Clinton Scollard.

## VIII

## PERFECT PEACE

*"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee."*—ISAIAH 26:3.

*"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you."*—JOHN 14:27.

*"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."*—PHILIPPIANS 4:7.

IN speaking of peace we do not have in mind the thing that men arrive at by laying down arms and signing agreements and protocols. The peace we seek has nothing to do with disarmanent nor the leaving of the battlefield by opposing troops. It knows nothing of such words as "evacuation," "surrender," "subjugation," "arbitration." A military peace is easy, for a few men agree and carnage stops. A paper is signed, and the rain of bullets and the roar of siege guns cease. But the men who leave the trenches, taking their souls with them, are just as peaceless in their individual lives, just as restless and hungering in their souls, as before. Neither the treaty of Tilsit nor Ghent nor Paris nor Portsmouth nor Versailles, nor any of

the decisions of the Hague Tribunal ever brought peace to a single burdened human soul, though these decisions and agreements have blessed nations and changed the destiny of the world.

We must go onto the battle ground of every man's heart when we talk about the peace of God. We must get within the individual soul when we take up this peace parley in which God and the human soul are the sole participants.

Is there such a thing as peace and joy in human life? Are we chasing a will-o'-the-wisp when seeking peace? Does a man who lives a sheltered life and who stands in a pulpit on Sunday and faces with his calm soul a company of perplexed and harassed men and women who are moving during the week amidst the trying things of business, know what a poignant desire for rest fills men's hearts? One standing in the serene and quiet atmosphere of a pulpit behind a Bible, with a choir chanting soft measures of music, may easily pronounce with apostolic fervour a benediction upon haunted hearts and distressed minds, saying with all sincerity, " Grace, mercy and peace be with you all, now and for evermore, Amen." " Very easy," says the man with a note at bank coming due next morning and no renewal likely and his checking account wiped out. " Very lovely and spiritual," says a weary mother with a sick child and household anxieties, " but what an inconsistent and impossible thing." There are so many harsh

noises, so many sharp burdens, so many infesting cares, so many inescapable sources of trouble that these unearthly texts and the pastor's benediction seem but a part of the same vague, dreamy thing that we follow fruitlessly through a poet's allegory.

With this great difference, that men *have* found and appropriated this peace of God. It is not a will-o'-the-wisp. Not an impossible, golden dream born of the wishes of harassed men. People know when they find it. It is as unmistakable as the coming of dawn and sunrise after a dark night. It comes as the vernal air of spring to revive and beautify after a winter of storm and chill. It calms and uplifts the heart like the music of some glorious anthem. The peace of God in a world of war and a life of sin is a fact.

It is to be kept in mind, when we talk of the peace of God, that *the supreme conditions of this peace lie inside.* The outside has little or nothing to do with a man's signing this compact of peace with God and claiming it. The late George Matheson, the blind Scotch preacher, in speaking of the supremacy of the inside over the outside, said, " Many a physical impression which was a pleasure yesterday becomes a pain today," because the inside has changed. Nobody revels more in wood and field than the happy lover, but that same lover *unhappy* is offended by that which once made him glad, and he cries,

*"Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon*
*How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair."*

It is the fact of the inside being absolutely unconquerable by the outside that makes this peace of God pass the understanding. How a zone of calm can hold the centre of a man's life while storms rage all about is not explainable apart from faith in God.

Five hundred years ago John Huss met the storms of a hating Church. The world of organized religion rose against him. The august Council of Constance treated him with brutal disregard and condemned him without fair hearing. He was chained in a poisoned prison for months and finally brought into an open square and pinioned to the stake. The mobs jeered while fagots were piled about him and the flames finally consumed his poor body. Yet John Huss had in it all the peace of God that passed the understanding of men. Men held their breath in amazement at the serenity of Huss.

"Chinese" Gordon, in a whirlwind of angry hornets in besieged Khartoum, died chanting the twenty-first and thirty-first Psalms. The madhi and his fanatical, dervish warriors raved about Gordon's garrison. Famine, physical suffering, and anxiety pressed Gordon on every hand. The ministry of Gladstone seemed to have forgotten him in the slow response to his cry for help.

The furious storm finally broke and Gordon and his besieged men fell. But in all the distress of the long, harrowing experience a calm peace rested in Gordon's heart. He had what fortresses of guns and superior forces could not have provided, and he died a patriot, Christian martyr, with the peace which passes understanding keeping his mind.

Some years ago I walked as far as I could in company with a dear friend who was starting on a journey. The journey which he was to undertake was long and full of mystery. It was not taken on his own initiative and it was one from which he was not to return. He knew that every step of every day brought him nearer to the hour of his departure. There were trying experiences in connection with his going. He had made ample provision for his loved ones during what was to be a prolonged absence, but even that achievement brought no tranquillity. He never talked about his bank account when discussing his leave-taking. He had influence commercially which had been gained during a long life of successful business, but as he took my hand and we walked together toward the gateway out of which he was to pass, he did not once refer to any satisfaction from his influence in the commercial world. The nearer he came to the time of his going, the more sure he was of a fixed, undisturbed joy and peace that God had given him while on one occasion he was reading the eighth chapter of Romans. It was in his heart every

moment, and it was that spirit-given blessing that came as he read, that brought him rest and victory! And, as we finally parted, he bade me farewell with a smile on his face that shines in my memory like some foregleam of heaven, and I felt afresh the meaning of Whittier's lines:

> *"Alas, for him who never sees*
> *The stars shine through his cypress trees,*
> *Who, hopeless, lays his dead away*
> *Nor looks to see the breaking day."*

But this peace of God is not simply available at the great crises in life,—few of which come to us—but for the constantly recurring exasperations and irritations of every day. And, after all, this is its chief testing field. Men want an available joy and peace to live by every day. It is a power living in us daily to hold us in restraint. Is your temper control under a strain? Do you grow impatient when purposes are crossed and plans thwarted? Are you often hurt and quite unhappy while waiting for apologies that never come? Do you pass gloomy and irritable days when a difference of opinion or counter-judgment of others blocks some scheme of yours? Do you murmur when the day's task is long and its complications exacting? Do you have any effective method of dealing with daily troubles? Have you a harbour in which you can anchor when the storms rise? Do you have a quiet zone in your heart, like the quiet zone around a

hospital, into which you take the disordered and fractured feelings of your life and readjust and soothe them? Have you a deep place in your being where reason and good sense and faith in God sit on the throne and wherein is an unbroken sway of peace?

You are entitled to all this, under the articles of your faith. You are not getting all that is due you from your trust in God and the realities of your religion. There is a land of pure delight in every Christian heart where no intruder breaks in and spoils its peace. A busy man must find it and keep it or he will go down under the storms that beat against him. A busy, burdened woman must find it and keep that deep, serene, quiet place in her soul, or life loses its joy and power. It is there the best of life finds root. It is there the things of God and eternity grow. It is out from that holy, quiet spot God helps us to rule our lives in every hour and in everything. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee."

*"We bless Thee for Thy peace, O God,*
*Deep as the boundless sea.*
*It falls like sunshine on the road*
*Of those who trust in Thee.*
*That peace which suffers and is strong,*
*Trusts where it cannot see;*
*Deems not the way a way too long,*
*But leaves the end to Thee."*

# IX

# MAN'S MIND

*"I cannot think nor reason;*
*I only know He came*
*With hands and feet of healing*
*And wild heart all aflame.*
*With eyes that dimmed and softened*
*At all the things He saw,*
*And in His pillared singing*
*I read the marching law.*
*I only know He loves me,*
*Enfolds and understands—*
*And oh, His heart that holds me;*
*And oh, His certain hands!"*

—Willard Wattles.

*"For like the seas are His mysteries, not to be learned from a single surf-beat.*
*No wave suffices Him for a revelation.*
*How like the seas that dower all lands with green and the breath of blossoms,*
*With dews that never have heard its deathless surges.*
*Let me be patient, then—sure that stars are not jetsam tossing*
*On meaningless waters of waste Omnipotence.*
*Let me be patient, even when man is sunk in the storm of His purpose;*
*And swirled a strangled corpse, under His ages."*

—Cale Young Rice.

# IX

## MAN'S MIND

*"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . . with all thy soul and with all thy mind."*—MATTHEW 22:37.

*"I will put my laws into their mind."*—HEBREWS 8:10.

*"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind."*
—I PETER 1:13.

THE supreme thing in the whole catalogue of things from the primordial cell to God on His throne, is the thing we call mind. It is herein that the mystical thing called God's image dwells. It is by the capacities and abilities of this thing called mind that the secrets of time and eternity are read. By it is wealth of earth and sea and sky discovered, the pathways into the unexplored and unexplained followed, the fathomless deeps of men's souls plumbed and the unreachable heights of God approached. There is no miracle so wonderful as the gradual unfolding of the baby's mind in the presence of the strange phenomena of life; nothing more awe-inspiring than the conquering powers of the mind of great philosophers.

It would be a tragedy to find that religion had no place in the mind. A man moving in the world

would feel himself shut within a room of oppressive darkness and horror were he compelled to believe that in all the movements of matter and in all the unfolding features of life there was no mind to which his mind might respond. Were there no gleam of an intellect in all the dreary vastness of matter, no hint of the mind in the great spaces, no clew to thought amidst the sweeping orbits of worlds, no intelligence in the ordering of affairs calling to his intelligence—just blind matter moving as blind chance might dictate; life here would be a desperate enterprise leading us toward nothing but hopelessness and despair.

There are certain things the human mind asks of its religious faith in order to find intellectual satisfaction in it.

1. Some explanation of the vast material and spiritual universe. Who made it?

2. Some definite assurances as to the benign and wise control of all human affairs. Who runs it?

3. Some definite assurances as to a competent source of moral order in the universe. What is the purpose in it?

4. Some satisfactory statement as to the relation between God and the thinking mortal man here on earth. What is to become of it?

A religion that can be found capable of satisfying these major longings of men in these vital particulars will rise and stand like some shining beacon on a dark sea, bringing hope and joy to the whole race.

1. The mind wants to know what lies behind all this great infinite spectacle called the universe. "Whence?" "When?" "How?" "Whither?" "What of it?" These are the old interrogations that have chafed in men's minds since time began. Science has no answer. Science is not expected to do other than set facts in order after she has discovered them. She catalogues the stars, analyzes the stones, ascertains the chemical components of all things and sets her discoveries before us. There science stops. It is the end of her path. The plodding workman that digs up a buried city in Mesopotamia leaves me to find the architect whose glory it enshrines. The microscope, the telescope and the spectroscope, all speaking together, say, "We can go no further. Here are the facts that by our aid wisdom produces—make the most of them." It is at this point where the Christian religion steps in. Faith accepts the challenge of the sciences that have nobly gone their length. It says, behind all these things of the material universe is God—a personal, self-revealing, infinite, holy, loving God.

"The sea is his for he hath made it." "The moon and the stars which he hath ordained." "By him were all things made that are made, and without him was nothing made that is made." "In the beginning, God."

The Christian religion has never undertaken to tell how God made the universe. It makes no difference to Genesis how God made it. The

Bible's only desire is to proclaim God as its "creator, upholder and bountiful preserver." If creation came through long stages of evolution, it was His plan and purpose! If the process was instant, it was His power at work. The Christian religion holds that Almighty God is the maker of heaven and earth, even though His way and mode of making it rest in mystery. "It is he that hath made us and not we ourselves." "He is our God and we are his people."

2. Another inquiry of the mind must be answered. Who orders the affairs of this world? Is it some infinite, gracious autocrat who sits on a throne and exacts obedience to detailed orders issued millions of years ago? Are we like little insignificant motes in the movements of great worlds? Are we swept this way and that by the changing winds of chance? Does my daily experience concern anybody but myself? Am I drifting aimlessly or is there a chart by which my going is marked? And is the chart drawn in wisdom and love? Is there a general superintendent of the system? Is there a system, a comprehensive plan that includes all men and everything? What is pushing me on? Who is holding me back? Is there a benign, gracious overshadowing of my free life by some infinite, wise and tender hand? Who is running this cosmic thing of which I seem but an infinitesimal part?

This is one of the world's most tormenting ques-

tions. The old pagans said, "Angry gods this world rule, and they must be appeased by sacrifices!" "Blind, relentless fates hold your life; cruel and mocking, they order your way." "Therefore, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!"

To this piteous call of the mind our Christian faith answers with profound assurance in the language of one of our own poets:

*"Behind the dim unknown*
*Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch*
*above His own."*

For men of the Christian faith the dread of chance is gone! The hateful power of Fate is no more! "In him we live and move and have our being." "The Lord is my shepherd." "If God so clothe the grass of the field . . . shall he not much more clothe you?" "Cast all your care upon him for he careth for you."

This is not philosophy, nor metaphysics, nor even theology. This is the actual achievement of faith!

*"I know not where His islands lift*
*Their fronded palms in air,*
*I only know I cannot drift*
*Beyond His love and care!"*

3. What about any fixed source and centre of moral order in this world? Is there one? Who

can tell? Do human laws create that centre? Do the legislatures of the states and the parliaments of men determine what is morally right and what is morally wrong? Is there anything that guarantees the eternal character of right? Who put this mysterious thing at work within me that we call conscience? Does it point back to anything more than habit arising from doing things the same way again and again? Is it some borrowed sense of higher things? Who speaks to me in the quiet of the night and, like some audible voice, reminds me that the thing I did ten years ago or fifty years ago was wrong? What is it we violate besides the written laws? What is it that condemns us for wrongs long before we break the statutes of the state or outrage openly the moral code of society? Is there any fountain of rightness that flows down into life?

The old Greeks had Olympus the home of their gods and their chief seat of moral sanctions. But there was pandemonium and moral chaos on Olympus. Greece had no moral universe. There was no unity of moral standards, no sufficient source of moral order anywhere in the Greek or Roman world. Everyone was a law unto himself. Our Christian religion safeguards the unchanging sanctity of moral order by finding at the centre of the universe an infinitely holy, righteous, just and moral being out of whose life all goodness and rightness come and whose unchanging character

underwrites the stability of all moral order. Men who draw their motives from this high source have never-failing supplies at their disposal. When a law starts at this upper level or an action is born at this source, its rightness is never questioned! Into this holy of holies we must carry for testing, the items of our conduct, the things of daily practice, the policies and programs of life. Here is a sanction that is unchanging and essential. "The righteous Lord loveth righteousness," Ps. 11: 7. "As for God, his ways are perfect," Ps. 18: 30. "Thy righteousness is everlasting righteousness," Ps. 119: 142. That light at our elbow comes from the central power plant. This moral incandescence in our dark world is born of God, the centre of all moral order.

4. Amidst the age-old, unanswered questions of the mind has been another which Christianity alone has undertaken to answer. What relation is this thinking mortal, who is here today and gone tomorrow, to this infinite God—the source of all things and the general superintendent of all affairs?

Is mankind an embarrassing accident amidst the star-dust and fire-dust of these inanimate worlds? What is his place and destiny? If he is not wholly dust, but has something immortal and God-like in him, is he not out of harmony with his surroundings where the bulk of things is mere fleeting matter? How shall we classify him? Is he simply another combination of phosphates and lime and nitro-

genous matter? The agnostics and cynics of every age have commented variously on the situation. They have made gruesome jokes and trivial comments on the brief, ambitious, but futile career of a man who "begins life with a cry and ends it with a sigh."

The world has been reassured at this point by our faith in a most positive fashion. Our faith holds that we not only came from God and go to God, but that our life here and hereafter is God's life! We are one with Him. We are wrapped in His destiny. Our personal existence is identified with His personal existence. We live as long as He lives! This is the unique and hitherto unheard-of truth that Christ revealed! It clothes our poor miserable mankind with dignity and glory. It guarantees to us immortality and makes the hereafter a happy, comforting certainty! It was this mystical oneness that Jesus urged as a fact and as a precious experience upon His disciples. To this great fact we anchor our faith for the endless morrow. One with Him, our changeless God and guide, we go on amidst the shifting scenes of this present life with songs of hope steadying our hearts! He lives and so shall we. Our littleness will take on something of His amplitude and grandeur.

Upon these great facts our faith rests. "*Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.*"

# X

# IMMORTALITY

*"But O blithe breeze, and O great seas,*
*Though ne'er, that earliest parting past,*
*On your wide plain they join again,*
*Together lead them home at last.*

*"One port methought, alike they sought,*
*One purpose hold where'er they fare—*
*O bounding breeze, O rushing seas!*
*At last, at last, unite them there!"*

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*"So shall it be at last in that bright morning*
*When the soul waketh, and life's shadows flee;*
*O, in that hour, and fairer than day's dawning*
*Shall rise the glorious thought, I am with Thee."*

—HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

# X

## IMMORTALITY

*"Who hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."*—II TIMOTHY 1 : 10.

IMMORTALITY is not an original invention of the Christian faith. It is not something achieved for the first time by our risen Lord, whose resurrection we celebrate on Easter. It is not new with Him as He came out of the tomb. It had its birth when God the Creator breathed His own life into created man. Immortality is an inherent quality of the human soul. The resurrection of Jesus simply brings it to light. Easter makes plain something that has always existed, but which our human sense has never been able to discover nor science to prove.

Sir Isaac Newton, one of the world's greatest mathematicians and physicists, did not invent gravity. From the beginning it held worlds in their vast sweep through space and stayed the atoms in their infinitesimal orbits, but till Isaac Newton, in 1665, sitting in his garden at Woolsthorpe, saw an apple fall from the tree and began to think, the sublime

fact of universal gravitation remained unknown to men. But it always had been. It was not new to Newton's garden, nor a unique quality belonging to Newton's apples. Newton simply brought gravity to light.

Benjamin Franklin was one of the most remarkable students and one of the most ingenious inventors that his day produced. But with his kite and key he did not invent electricity, in 1750. Neither did Sir Humphry Davy nor Michael Faraday nor Lord Kelvin. These pioneer students of nature's occult forces did not invent nor create a single spark of this marvellous force. That majestic and mysterious power, like some magic fluid, had always saturated every minute ingredient of the universe. It had toyed with the planets in space and the metals in the heart of the earth since the dawn of time's morning. These great inventors simply brought electricity to light.

Steam is one of the original elements of the world of matter. It is water in gaseous condition. It was the vapour and mist that hung over chaos before matter took form. Bring fire and water together and without the slightest chemical change the water—that ancient element of creation—becomes steam, and steam has revolutionized the history of the human race. Neither the Marquis of Worcester nor Thomas Savery invented steam, although they thrilled all England, in 1663, by using crude steam pumps to drain the mines of

Cornwall. Neither Papin, the celebrated Frenchman who discovered the piston, in 1795, nor James Watt, England's famous father of steam, who died in 1819, as the engines he built were beginning to move, created a single ounce of steam. Papin, Savery and Watt simply brought steam to light.

Christopher Columbus did not create America, in 1492. Like some phantom island drifting in an unknown sea, a vast land lying to the west had called to men in their dreams through centuries. But darkness covered the horizons and fear shut them away from the most glorious continent on the surface of the earth. It had no reality to the civilized world till the little caravels of Columbus broke through the barrier of ignorance and fear and lifted the veil from America. Till that solemn hour when Columbus and his sorely tried crew knelt on the shores of America, that which had always been a great, rich, potential continent, was as though it had never been! Columbus brought America to light. Great inquirers and discoverers have bravely wrought and sorely sacrificed in order to disclose realities that our ignorance has obscured.

In this same way, Christ has brought life and immortality to light. Life has always been a continuous, unbroken current. Its reality has never been quenched by death, but only when Christ brought the fact to visibility did man really know. Men saw the stream of life move down through the years and disappear into the grave. The earth

buried life in a silent, meaningless oblivion. Dust seemed to be the goal. The tragic terminal of all living, so far as the human eye could see, was the narrow house of clay. All the pomp and power of kings availed nothing to keep life continuously on earth. All the wisdom of the wise failed to locate life and identify it after it left the body. It ran its course for master and servant alike, and both were swept out into the dark on the bosom of the same resistless tide. No echoes ever came back. No signals were ever lifted from the other shore. Tut-ankh-amen and his predecessors in power longed for a future life and made ready to live in some royal realm beyond, but their silent mummified forms today tell nothing. Plato reasoned to the highest point that the human intellect had ever touched, then went bravely, but hopelessly, into the night of death. From him no voice has ever been heard. The good and the great, the bond and the free, the wise and the ignorant, the rich and the poor, all alike have moved on in this endless procession and have ceased to be. They have silently passed to another world through the aperture called the grave; they have closed the muffled door behind them while the years of silence have lengthened into centuries and the centuries into ages.

Our Christian faith and philosophy join, today, in holding that the living stream flows on. Under different skies, through other zones, beneath the eternal hills of God it flows on and on. The Per-

sians painted their hopes of everlasting life as the flame of an undying fire. The Egyptians carved their hopes of immortality in an unfolding lotus bud. Socrates saw life on earth as a shadow of the real light shining from another world. But the mystery grew more deep and the puzzle more baffling as the millions of men moved on like outgoing caravans that never returned. Finally, across the graves of countless noble dead, loving friends in hopeless gloom laid an empty, reversed torch representing life, forever extinguished. All the voices that had hitherto called had found no answer. All the visions had faded. All hopes were gone. And the world, with its empires fading and falling, its monuments and material achievements crumbling to dust, its wise men blind and dumb, sat down in the shadows to wait and grieve and pray. The greatest among them voiced the heart-cry of all men when he said, long, long before Easter morning had dawned, " Oh, that some God or God-man would come and take this darkness from our eyes."

No wonder we sing our most joy-giving anthems at Easter! We do well to decorate the churches with finest flowers at that glad festival. There is a reason! There is here, today, the answer to an age-old question that has shut the hearts of men in prisons of fear and bound their lives in anxiety and despair. This day a new visibility was brought to the thing men yearned for, so long hidden in the

mist of a world's ignorance. There is a new reality to the spiritual life that Easter underwrites. There is a note of hope which the resurrection of our Lord gives to our song. Life here takes on a new glory and a nobler dignity because of what Easter promises. "He [our risen Lord] hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light."

Since that word has been spoken there has been continual springtime in the soul. No matter how drear and chill the shadows of winter may have been, the warm springtime of hope returns. There is a new slant to the sunlight as it falls across the open doorway of our Lord's empty tomb. There is a kindling glow in the sunlight as it issues forth from the little garden of victory where they had laid Him whom death could not hold. There is a reviving power in the rays of the sun as it steals across the hill under which His deserted tomb has lain for two thousand years.

Death and winter interpreted in terms of our spiritual life are parallel features. The springtime of hope and the Easter life have sealed the doom of both. They have lost their power. Their sceptre has gone. Endless life and growth are ours. Spiritual joy and peace abide. The future is glad with its open doorway into a larger life and a more glorious light. With Whittier we know

> *"That love will dream and faith will trust*
> *(Since He who knows our need is just.)*
> *That somehow, somewhere, meet we must."*

# XI

# MARTHA AND MARY

*"The Sons of Mary seldom bother, for they have inherited that good part,*
*But the Sons of Martha favour the Mother of the careful soul and the troubled heart.*
*It is their care that the gear engages, it is their care that the switches lock;*
*It is their care that the wheels run truly; it is their care to embark and entrain,*
*Tally, transport and deliver duly the Sons of Mary by land and main.*

*"And the Sons of Mary smile and are blessèd—they know the angels are on their side.*
*They know in them is the Grace confessèd, and for them are the Mercies multiplied.*
*They sit at the Feet—they hear the Word—they know how truly the Promise runs.*
*They have cast their burden on the Lord, and—the Lord He lays it on Martha's Sons."*

—RUDYARD KIPLING.

*"Their furrows down the fields of years*
*Are straight and true and deep.*
*O simple ploughmen pioneers,*
*God rest you in your sleep!*
*And we who swell with lusty breath*
*The ballads of the brave,*
*Will rouse a chant for noble death*
*And sing it o'er your grave."*

—OMAR BARKER.

# XI

## MARTHA AND MARY

*"Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary which also sat at Jesus' feet and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving."*—LUKE 10: 38-40.

THIS text has afforded ministers a very wide and suggestive field for their business of interpreting and applying truth. Confronting the profound truth lying in this text and seeking to do justice to both of these immortal sisters, it will be in order to undertake a consideration of their viewpoints of life and the very practical significance in the world's work of such diverse temperaments as they represent. There is a charitable view of this surprising bit of domestic discussion. There need be no harsh judgments delivered. The facts are not all presented in the story. Every reader must supply them and every woman can.

One appreciates the scrupulous care and nervous efficiency of Martha in all the necessary matters of the housekeeping, and estimates highly the worth of a woman of her kind at every needy point in the world's work. One had best be cautious in joining

in the too general deprecation of Martha's being busy preparing for the comfort of her family and guests, while there was at hand a great chance for inspiration that she seemed to slight. We shall always regret that it happened as it did and that the kitchen work that engaged Martha's mind had to be done, keeping her occupied while so rare a companion as Jesus was under her roof. We must have more incriminating facts in hand than we have before allowing a condemnation of Martha's moral tastes. We will always deeply regret the loss she met through the heavy pressure of household work, but also we will recognize gratefully her gift for effective hospitality.

One must love the large-mindedness and spirituality of Mary, and truly appreciate the place in the world's work that such people with their rapt souls and ardent natures occupy. They hear the higher calls and are always reaching for the nobler visions. We will not join in reproving Mary for what seemed an unsisterly shirking of the domestic duties and an unkind burdening of Martha. We need not quibble about small things suggested in the incident, nor over-analyze the weakness and one-sidedness of the good women. There are large principles involved here that may be lost sight of when teachers undertake to interpret Jesus as unqualifiedly rebuking Martha and positively commending Mary. Such conclusion leaves the picture unfinished and its implications unfair.

The following observations should be made:

1. We are indebted to Martha.

2. We are indebted to Mary.

3. Every well-balanced, efficient nature must combine the differing traits here exposed in these sisters.

This would be a very dull world without Martha. Its going forward would be very slow without those who take hold on life close to the earth and do the ordinary, commonplace things. Martha was not likely doing one unnecessary thing—certainly nothing improper. There was food to prepare, the house to set in order and many small duties that follow the obligations of hospitality. The routine things of life must be done.

*"Yes, Lord. Yet some must serve.*
*Not all with tranquil heart*
*At Thy dear feet,*
*Wrapped in devotion sweet,*
*May sit apart.*

*"Yes, Lord. For man must earn,*
*And woman make the bread;*
*And some must watch*
*And early wake for others' sake*
*Who pray instead."*

We are in Martha's debt. We enjoy a thousand blessings because Martha and those like her are willing to take responsibility for the commonplace duties and routine services that make these blessings possible. We are not blind to the peril of soul

that threatens the overwrought "fussy" men and women who fill life exclusively with drudgery, and are weighted down solely with small things. We must pay tribute to Martha and to the people of this world who are willing to do these necessary, obscure, and monotonous things without which civilization, moral progress, and the best things of home life, school life and church life would be impossible. There are thousands of details in the program of daily drudgery that people like Martha gladly undertake, without the doing of which the vision of the artist, architect and every lofty dreamer would not be realized.

We need to remember with Longfellow that:

*"All common things—each day's events*
*That with the hour begin and end,*
*Our pleasures and our discontents,*
*Are rounds by which we may ascend.*

*"We have not wings, we cannot soar,*
*But we have feet to scale and climb*
*By slow degrees, by more and more,*
*The cloudy summits of our time."*

Underneath every smoothly-running household is a willing Martha who has bent her back to the burden. Down below the outer signs of great business achievement and prosperity some sweating, tireless, devoted genius is always at work. Behind the pomp and glory of general and captain; behind the banners and martial music of every returning vic-

torious regiment is the blood and suffering and brave fighting of unknown men. Under the domes of our great cathedrals, with their deans and bishops, behind the organized machinery of our churches, within the ranks of the far-flung mission lines, at the heart of all our philanthropies and reforms, and under all plans of human redemption are to be found, obscured and withdrawn from public gaze and glamour, tireless, cross-bearing men of God, by whose living, serving, dying, these things rise and are maintained from age to age. The crowds praise with shouting the mounted leader of the host, or the captain of the enterprise, or the crimson-robed princes of the church, but God knows the man below, and God looks with particular pleasure on the hidden lives of those who lift these leaders on their shoulders. We need the Marthas, and the sons of Martha, to make the world go on.

We are indebted to Mary. Mary was what she was by reason of temperament. She doubtless had an aptitude for visions, and found her great delight in contemplating them. She had a spirituality that brought things of the other and higher world near. She was at home with Jesus and holy things. There may not have been any dislike of the irksome, humdrum drudgery of life on her part. It is not necessary so to conclude. She knew what household cares meant and that things of a menial nature had to be done. We have no right to put Mary into a

class of dreamy, impractical, ecstatic women to whom this present earthly life has no special interest. Mary simply had a quickened spiritual sense which her housework had not dulled. She had a feeling for God and Godlike things which gave these things of daily toil their proper place in her program. She would not neglect the kitchen, nor the duties of hospitality. She would simply take things in order. She saw beyond the kitchen. She had glimpses of great horizons wherein kitchen life was set, and she felt the call of those far horizons upon her soul just as much as she did the call of the kitchen. Every kitchen chore was good when Mary set it into its place in the scheme of God's wider horizon. She felt none the less interest in the routine of Martha's house because her soul had seen and taken hold on the vast themes of her Lord's thought and work. Those who have seen beyond the day's work, have seen something that puts a glory about the tiniest task they do. Those who have dreamed dreams have been those who put the spurs to the race and set goals before men that made life new and nobler for all.

It was what Isaiah saw beyond the market-places of Jerusalem that inspired Israel to her best self. Columbus dreamed of a spherical earth and a sea track to India, and the fleets of the world spread their sails and followed his dream. Gutenberg dreamed of a printed Bible for everybody, and the world was made over again by what he saw.

Luther saw a liberty of conscience and a new atmosphere for the mind and heart of man, and what Luther saw beyond his cell wall turned Europe upside down and changed the destiny of the race. William Carey was a good cobbler in Northampton and Leicester, but from his shop his heart went out to an unsaved world that did not know God, and he rose and went forth toward his dream, and Robert Morrison followed. So did Alexander Duff and Adoniram Judson, and Samuel J. Mills, and David Livingstone and a constantly growing army of missionaries.

We shall not get to higher grounds in our own souls and the moral life of the world, unless there be those who by nature and capacity are fitted to wait for and receive the things of God, and show them to us and point us to the path by which we shall come up to them.

Martha and Mary are two people without whose help the kingdom will falter in its progress, but they must work together. We must learn of them. We shall never be worth much in meeting the everlasting routine in the toil of life if at the same time we have not in us the native ability to sit down with Jesus and calmly share His holy feelings and visions on behalf of men and God. We shall lose our efficiency in a world crowded with drudgery of detail if we let the years go by and we do not cultivate a spiritual hunger and a capacity for companionship with Jesus. Business men are laying plans for

a dreary and comfortless old age when they live a busy, preoccupied life and neglect, till age cuts the nerves of power, to cultivate the ability to enjoy God and Godlike things, and to sit at ease when Jesus comes near.

Unless we see visions from the busy desk today, we hinder our best at the desk as well as outside; unless we have fellowship with our great Guest, even while serving Him in the kitchen, we shall paralyse our ability to enjoy Him and all holy things.

Unless we combine in us the power to see the big things and the willingness to do the little things, to meet Jesus in holy conversation and at the same time do our part to lift the burdens of the household—unless spirituality goes hand in hand with practical service, we shall find life an empty, fruitless thing, and our souls bereft of satisfaction.

*"No service in itself is small;*
*None great, though earth it fill.*
*But that is small that seeks its own,*
*And great, that seeks His will.*

*"Then hold my hand, most gracious God,*
*Guide all my goings still;*
*And let it be my life's own aim*
*To know and do Thy will."*

# XII

# PRAYER

*"Lord, send Thy light.*
*Not only in the darkest night,*
*But in the shadowy, dim twilight,*
*Wherein my strained and aching sight*
*Can scarce distinguish wrong from right,*
*Then send light.*

*"Teach me to pray.*
*Not only in the morning gray*
*Or when the moonbeam's silver ray*
*Falls on me, but at high noonday,*
*When pleasure beckons me away,*
*Teach me to pray."*

—CONSTANCE MILMAN.

*"Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong*
*Or others—that we are not always strong;*
*That we are ever overborne with care;*
*That we should ever weak or heartless be,*
*Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,*
*And joy and strength and courage are with Thee?"*

—FRENCH.

*"As the marsh-hen secretly builds on the watery sod,*
*Behold I will build me a nest on the greatness of God;*
*I will fly in the greatness of God as the marsh-hen flies*
*In the freedom that fills all the space 'twixt the marsh and the skies;*
*By so many roots as the marsh-grass sends in the sod—*
*I will heartily lay me a-hold on the greatness of God."*

—SIDNEY LANIER.

## XII

## PRAYER

*"And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers and read it: and Hezekiah went into the house of the Lord and spread it before the Lord."*—II Kings 19: 14.

WE must not obscure the moral point of this text by any extended recital of the rapidly-moving events that sweep across its background. However, they are too interesting to pass. In all the dramatic periods of Jewish history there is none more astir with life, more thronged with passionate figures, more shadowed with sorrow, more filled with bitterness and disappointment, than this particular one out of which the beautiful and impressive incident of our text arises.

Hezekiah is king of Judah. He has fought to keep the people of his kingdom free and independent. Sennacherib, with his Assyrian troops, has swept the land of Syria. Its cities have fallen. The glorious cedars of Lebanon have been burned, and the iron heel of the tyrant is on all the land. Sennacherib is on his way to Egypt to drain its canals and take tribute of its grain and gold. On

his victorious progress through Syria, hilltop after hilltop has had to yield. All but the fortress of Zion have surrendered. Here, in the fortified city of Jerusalem, stands Hezekiah. The tidal wave of Assyrian power is rushing on. At last Sennacherib sets up his sculptured throne on the ruins of a nearby city of Judah and writes a letter to Hezekiah, picturing to him the horror of his fate, if he refuses to yield. The letter is sent by the hand of the chief of staff, who is accompanied by a pompous retinue. It was a bold, contemptuous and peremptory letter. It reeked with blood.

While the written word was being carried into the presence of Hezekiah, the message was being noisily delivered from the hill slopes to the terrified people by loud-voiced messengers. The throne-room was in a panic. Hezekiah's secretaries tore their garments in shreds as they handed the letter of doom. A few hours only and the Assyrian wolf would descend upon them. Judah would be as the city of Lachish and as Damascus and as the smoking ruins of Ephraim. Even now the scarlet-clad horsemen stand before the gates of Jerusalem. The chariots and foot soldiers with red shields fill the ravines. The proudest regiment of archers in all ancient history is on the slopes.

Midst the din and clamour of the warriors without and the strange indifference of the people within, Isaiah, on fire with indignation and full of indomitable hope, moves through the streets, chid-

ing, exhorting and pleading for faith and trust in Almighty God. It is a breath-taking moment, with the destiny of a kingdom in the balance.

The next step of King Hezekiah becomes of world-wide importance. Under the trying circumstances, what will he do? Will the cabinet be called? Will the court constabulary be summoned and sent like frenzied messengers through the highways to arouse the people? What is the next gesture due from this chief character in the drama?

The text tells. "And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers." He did the most courteous and natural thing. He read it. And now his next step in the midst of the national tragedy is most impressive. "And Hezekiah went into the house of the Lord and spread it before the Lord." It is this significant action of Hezekiah that commands attention.

We now forget the haughty messengers on the hilltop and the vast hordes of Sennacherib waiting his command. King Hekeziah, on his knees in the Temple, with the outspread letter before him, talking to God about it, is the main feature in the landscape.

In this dramatic situation we locate several lessons about the place and power of prayer in a man's life. With Hezekiah's example in the background, we may conclude that: The spreading of our difficulties before the Lord, as Hezekiah spread

his letter, is a sure approach to that mental poise which should be ours when we face emergencies.

This dazed and perplexed king went to his knees with what seemed to be the death-knell of his kingdom ringing in his ears. Affairs could not be worse. Cabinet officers were frenzied. Secretaries were panic-struck. Hezekiah was at his wit's end. Minutes were like hours. To a thousand questions there was no answer. And with his brain buzzing with contradictory and impossible things, his heart surging with indescribable feelings, he turns aside, seeks the quiet shadows of the Temple altar and there spreads the whole confused and terrible situation before the Lord. This was the sure pathway to peace as blazed by a perplexed king.

When the brain is racked with the pressure of unsolved problems and all about are the spear-points of hostile forces making progress impossible, what are men who believe in God to do? They are to seek some quiet sanctuary into which to carry the puzzled and outwitted intellect. They are to go aside and spread their troubles before God. Amidst the intruding and disturbing things that spoil our peace and imperil our daily efficiency, there is an intellectual calm and a mental poise that is to be found nowhere in all the world except in the noiseless corridors of prayer. People have yet to fully realize the supreme contribution to rest, peace, poise, power, that is born of this act of Hezekiah when shutting his ears to the war-trumpets at

his besieged city gates he went alone into the separated and sanctified spaces of the sanctuary and knelt down before the Lord.

Perplexed and dazed men must take their clouded minds into the clarifying atmosphere of prayer. There is a calm that is waiting there that nothing can disturb, not even Sennacherib and all his gilded gentry in battle array at the gates. While they boast and wait, God's man finds the only path that leads to mental poise in the emergencies of life.

The second thing to be noted is, that praying before planning is Hezekiah's program in an emergency. It would seem foolhardy to delay one moment the appeal to defensive machinery when such a threatening situation overhangs. Hezekiah has been compelled to bargain for time with the Assyrian generals. He paid them for their holding off in gold leaf from the Temple doors and a vast sum of money besides. Surely it is time to strike! If human wisdom is to guide, Hezekiah should call his staff about him, announce his battle plan, sound the war-horn and organize a grand sally. To wait an hour will give the haughty warriors that are so eager for blood the very chance they seek. It is action that is needed. Apparatus and enginery should be immediately appealed to. Committees should be called, schemes drafted, propaganda started, loans floated, commissary organized, all the noisy, outward activities of war instantly

should be called forth. It is a supremely critical moment. But Hezekiah will make no plans until he prays. He believes that human lives and purpose must be directed of God, and that no man is ready or competent to act yonder in the visible world till he has taken counsel of the invisible.

Hezekiah is far from being a visionary emotionalist. He is simply a man who recognizes that he is a partner in two worlds. That he moves in one, by the power and direction of the other. He knows that machinery always comes second in the organization of the supreme forces of life—that personality, the spiritual equation in us, is greatest. He knows that personality is the inward and direct agent of God's own life, the channel of His own power, the human area in which lies His own divine image. He knows that this supreme thing in us, with which God has fellowship and to which His will is made known and by which His purpose is accomplished, defies all outward enemies and baffles all external machinery. So before the program is made, Hezekiah puts his personality in sympathetic touch with its divine Creator, Comrade and Counsellor. It was right and wise then; it is right and wise now.

Men know what God wants, and how He feels and what His divine suggestions are. They should seek to harmonize themselves with Him as far as the quiet, receptive communicating moment we call prayer will make these things plain; then, with

ardour and skill and persistency set the machinery in motion. In their personal planning, men must not reverse the program. They must not be guilty of erecting the apparatus or setting up the machinery before they have the power plant. They must pray, then set the program. Spread the letter of the enemy before God, then call the military.

Finally, we note that here was a man going into the spiritual world for reinforcements when the material world about him offered nothing but immediate and certain defeat.

Lord Northcliffe said, when the World War was at its height, that the thing on which we had to depend for victory lay in the realm of the " imponderables." The battleships, the Allied armies, the total machinery of war, all these things were second in importance to the " imponderables." The things that lived in the spiritual world, the invisible realities of the moral life, the forces that fought and wrought in men's souls. These things won the war. Without the invisible and the imponderable things of the soul, all war machinery would have been useless junk. Hezekiah on his knees with Sennacherib's letter open before him, and the seething mass of hostile soldiery around him, knew that victory in that hour was to be determined by " the imponderables." He, therefore, in that hour when externals held no hope for him, deliberately appealed to the Commander-in-Chief over all the imponderables. We are all misled by the heresy that God is on the

side of the biggest guns. It is not true. He has never been, except when the biggest guns were on His side. History denies it. Daily experience contradicts it. God is not the God of apparatus or enginery, but God is a Spirit. His omnipotence moves through men's souls and works when and where machinery fails. Therefore, in daily life, with its problems and perplexities, men must follow the practice of Hezekiah if they would find the source of victorious spiritual power and meet their material difficulties with spiritual forces.

Cowper spoke the truth, to which men who pray gladly agree, when he said:

*"Prayer makes the darkened clouds withdraw,*
*Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw;*
*Gives exercise to faith and love,*
*Brings every blessing from above.*
*Were half the breath that's vainly spent*
*To heaven in supplication sent,*
*Our cheerful song would oftener be,*
*'Hear what the Lord hath done for me.'"*

# XIII

# OUR CHILDREN

*"We are all architects of Fate,*
*Working in these walls of time:*
*Some with massive deeds and great,*
*Some with ornaments of rhyme.*

* * * * *

*"For the structure that we raise,*
*Time is with material filled;*
*Our todays and yesterdays*
*Are the blocks with which we build.*

* * * * *

*"Build today, then, strong and sure,*
*With a firm and ample base;*
*And ascending and secure*
*Shall tomorrow take its place."*

—LONGFELLOW.

*"The young child, Christ, is straight and wise,*
*And asks questions of the old men; questions*
*Found under running water for all children,*
*And found under shadows thrown upon still waters*
*By tall trees looking downward, old and gnarled,*
*Found to the eyes of children alone, untold,*
*Singing a low song in the loneliness.*
*And the young child, Christ, goes asking,*
*And the old men answer nothing and only know love*
*For the young child, Christ, straight and wise."*

—CARL SANDBURG.

# XIII

## OUR CHILDREN

*"For the promise is unto you and to your children."*—Acts 2: 39.

*"And took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them and blessed them."*—Mark 10: 16.

IT is time for a sane and sympathetic word about the children of today. It ought to come from the Christian pulpit. It should represent the utterance of that appreciating group in which, for two thousand years, the child has found its only just and adequate interpretation and its proper treatment in relation to itself, society and God.

Abnormal youth of today, with its precocity and mannerisms, is getting too much attention. The discussion of childhood and youth in our daily papers and magazines consists, generally, of a clever array of the obnoxious and forbidding things done by a few erratic and giddy children. The flippant fashion in which our young girls are discussed and classified, their dress minutely analysed, their motives impugned and their eccentricities magnified, has gone too far. The whole subject of modern girlhood is made the butt of unseemly

gossip and cynical comment. Such wholesale traducing of the tastes and character of our younger set of girls ought to call out from the chivalry of clean young men and from the loving pride of fatherhood indignant protests and honest, vigorous words of defense. It is time someone rose to differentiate and to insist that one foolish child, one grotesquely garmented girl, one loud boy, no matter how much publicity may be accorded to them, shall not be allowed to misrepresent a whole generation of boys and girls. A group of foolish girls that smoke and play bridge for stakes, who dress in barbaric fashion and do barbaric things to make themselves attractive to boys on the street or at the dance parties, shall not be allowed to misrepresent a whole generation of respectable and restrained girls whose virtues and fine qualities find no recognition in the newspapers.

These virtues and fine qualities are the ordinary things that prevail with our girls and call for no comment because they are so common and usual everywhere. The quiet, modestly clad, womanly girl goes by approved and without comment. But the girl, painted, powdered and coiffed and wearing the eccentric in clothes, is the subject of the sketchy talk and questionable interest. She is a weakling and her mild form of lunacy must not be allowed to cast suspicion on the sanity of all our girls.

There are young boys, today, who have grown old in the undesirable ways of the world at seven-

teen, but they must not be permitted to put all other boys of the generation into the catalogue of the silly and the sinful, nor make us forget the thousands of clean, respectful and obedient boys that fill the homes and satisfy the hearts of parents all over this country.

We must do our part to make intolerably obnoxious the girls whose manners and conduct belie their whole generation. We must heap shame and ridicule on the boys who despise and violate clean and good things, including their homes and their mothers' hearts and other boys' sisters, but we must be fair and well-judged toward our boys and girls, knowing that the noisy and objectionable boy or girl are the ostentatious minority, not the whole group. Before we gloomily forecast the future, or prophesy the collapse of all our ideals for boys and girls, let us think through the situation into which this generation has been born.

There are certain things which should be kept in mind when we talk about the children of today. Before we render our final judgment as to their being better or worse than we were at their age, we must recall two or three things.

First: The children of today are in the act of responding to an entirely new and highly complex environment. They have come into an age of miracle without knowing it! The inventions and scientific achievements that took the breath of those of us who have memories, even but twenty-five

years long, are to the children of today the ordinary, matter-of-fact things of daily life. I saw the first street-car propelled by electricity, running by fits and starts, in the grounds of the Columbian Exposition. Riding on it was so novel and unbelievable a sensation that passengers waved to the spectators in an amused and self-conscious way. I saw the first telephone that came into Southern Indiana during my freshman year at college, and when it was to be officially opened, none of the amazed student group present in the post-office knew enough to laugh when the president began to "hello" into the receiver rather than into the transmitter. The first horseless carriage made its precarious progress through the streets of Kokomo, Indiana, amidst the scoffing of boys who are but now approaching middle life. The incandescent light displaced the kerosene lamp and the illuminating gas, but a few years ago. I sent my first Marconigram, seventeen years ago, from the S. S. "Cedric," to friends on the S. S. "Carmania," both in mid-ocean and two hundred miles apart. It was an achievement of which to boast. The efforts of Chanute, Maxim, Langley, and the brothers Wright to construct a flying machine was for us of the older generation properly caricatured in "Darius Green and His Flying Machine." The submarine was a dream impossible, except for Jules Verne, till ten years ago. The moving-picture film, perhaps the most influential thing in modern times, is an

invention almost contemporaneous with our fifteen-year-old boys.

The wireless telephone, a marvellous, well-nigh uncanny discovery, is the home toy of boys today. In every realm of life, time and space have been practically eliminated. The developments in the mechanical and scientific world have been more notable since I was born, and I am a middle-aged man, than during the past 2,000 years. All life, thereby, has gone into a higher pitch.

Into this age of marvels these children are born and by them these epoch-making discoveries and inventions are accepted without amazement, or even surprise, as an obvious part of the ordinary life. This whole indescribable setting of our material civilization has forced this generation of children into an inevitable precocity. It has forever banished the old-time simplicity of life in home, school, work and play.

To this new environment that is beyond any man to describe, our children are now responding. Of course, it affects the present generation fundamentally, affects tastes, ambitions, studies and aims in life. It is no wonder that many a youth is swept from his feet as he comes into the complexity of this environment and undertakes to respond to it. It is a test, intellectual and moral, that is challenging the tenacious qualities even of matured men! Under it, youth is sure to break in regrettable instances of misbehaviour. Self-assertion and inde-

pendence inevitably are bred in the effort of our children to meet the call of such stimulating surroundings. Poise and courage and a daring that qualifies youth for aviation—the most daring enterprise of all time—are born of this effort to respond to the new facts of our day.

Another thing always to be kept in mind when trying to arrive at a just judgment on our children, is, that they have come into an era of preoccupied parenthood. This new environment to which parents also have undertaken to respond has started some amazing reactions in parents' lives. It has wrought definite changes in the character of home life. Civilization has put a great burden on good people. It has quickened their understanding of human needs and their appreciation of the value of truth and service for mankind; also it has developed a sense of oughtness in all good men and women from which they cannot escape without loss of self-respect and disregard of their conscience. Fathers and mothers in whose souls the highest and holiest impulses of a Christian civilization have flowered and fruited, are those whose leadership and co-operation have made possible the achievements in the realms of philanthropy and unselfish service. It is the motherhood of the nation that knows how to organize and administer orphanages, day nurseries and child welfare work. It is the fatherhood of the nation that builds and directs the hospitals, the asylums and reform schools. It is

the builders of homes and the sympathetic spirit of the family that maintain homes for dependent children, aged and infirm. It is out of the hearts of Christian parenthood that a tidal wave of love for lost men, women and children goes forth to the benighted corners of the earth.

There is a centrifugal passion born of the loving ingredients that meet and merge in every true home. It is the outgo of that passion that is saving the world.

This being said, it must be further remarked that other less worthy and positively undesirable conditions have wrought to explain this present preoccupied situation of modern parenthood. The economic grind preoccupies the father, the social and club program occupies the mother. The selfish things of the lodge, of golf, of the theatre and of travel, all work to break the continuity of parental contact and insulate parents from their children. At no point is civilization the gainer if men and women preoccupied and distracted, save, as it were, a whole world, and then lose their own family. We need not look very deeply to be made aware of the fact that the old unity of the household is gone. It was possible, twenty-five years ago. The evening hour is no longer the holy hour of happy oneness, but the signal for a general scattering all over the county. Children are being affected in character and conduct as well as in their own ideals of home life for the future by this era of preoccupation in

which parents are programming and propagating in the interests of the great whole while practically losing their grip on the precious part of that whole which God specifically gave into their care.

Then, too, it should be remembered that the children of today are repressed and dwarfed by a system of secularized education. There is something in every child bigger than his mind that needs to be liberated by his schooling. Wise teachers always go for that thing, whether the system under which they teach provides for it or not. Boys and girls are repressed and their noblest powers pitiably inhibited when they pass through their school period and no one opens for them the doorway through which their souls can pass toward God in a definite acknowledgment of Him and in a devotion of life to His service. It is this fatal repression of the moral nature of our children by a secularized system of education that is arousing not only thoughtful citizens but also the leaders in our educational work. Our schools must introduce a moral instruction that will not leave denatured the spiritual life of our children. The bleak, barren souls of boys and girls bereft of moral ideas and deprived of a sense of God cry out all over this nation for His direction and companionship. We have been so unwise as to believe that we could not disassociate morals and religion from a sectarianism that would violate a principle of our government. We must free ourselves of that misunderstanding be-

fore we are paganized. We must realize how essential to our stability as a social, political and economic national group is the planting of a moral sense in the heart life of our youth.

The dishonesty of boys in positions of trust, the story of hardened criminals at eighteen years of age, the loose and shocking conduct of girls surprisingly young and tender, drive home the unescapable duty of lodging at the source of all conduct a definite sense of God and moral oughtness. We must not be asked to pay for our cherished principle of separation of church and state a cost price that involves the dwarfing of our children in their moral growth and the aborting of their spiritual faculties.

Every good public school teacher seeks to circumvent this calamity by methods open to all sympathetic and spiritually enlightened workers. But to meet adequately the crisis of a secularized system of education and save to our children their spiritual heritage, the Church must rise and do her part. The week-day school of religion is coming to the help of our day school teachers who see this fatal lack in our public school system. Week-day religion under fine organization is at work in many places. Children gather in churches under pastors and other religious teachers for ninety minutes twice a week for more moral instruction in a year than they now get in ten years of the Sunday-school. Here is a responsibility the churches no

longer can avoid. The centre of the child's life must be spiritualized! Moral ideals must be planted in the tender soul of childhood or not at all.

We have, today, the most gifted and potential boys and girls the world ever saw. They are receptive of the good, they are hungry for leadership in the right. They call for a sympathetic, constructive, liberating program that will put body, mind and spirit into subjection to the ideals of Jesus, including a task commensurate with their conscious powers.

# XIV

# RAIN ON THE GRASS

*"The stars come nightly to the sky;*
*The tidal wave unto the sea;*
*Nor time, nor space, nor deep, nor high,*
*Can keep my own away from me."*

—JOHN BURROUGHS.

*"Lord, who walked upon the sea,*
*Is it you who pass*
*Softly in the grass*
*When a little wind blows over*
*Scarcely bending down the clover?*

*"Is this robe of blooming yours*
*Spread across the field*
*That its hem has healed*
*Suddenly my bitter heart*
*With a virtue passing art?"*

—HILDA MORRIS.

## XIV

## RAIN ON THE GRASS

*"He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass."*—PSALM 72:6.

BY reason of my boyhood experiences on the farm, the vocabulary of this text has always made a special appeal. There is an agricultural flavour to it that one easily recognizes. I knew the meadow in the glory of its late June ripeness and hold its fragrance to this day as an unforgettable memory. The literary charm of the Old Testament passages is often due to their being saturated with the atmosphere of field and meadow. The authors of the New Testament were principally city born, and men with no knowledge of land husbandry. There were no ancestral pastures, no landed possessions, no flocks and herds on the hills of their clans, that could give colour to their narrative, as in the case of the prophets and poets of their Palestinian forbears.

But I confess to have carried in my heart through all my childhood an aversion to this text. It never fell pleasantly upon my ears. Living

among the meadows, I knew the unseasonableness of rain in haying time. There were many moments of panic in my father's meadows as rain came. The new-mown grass lay sweet and odorous, curing in the sun. It was a critical moment in the process that changes the grass to hay. The meadow needed warm, drying winds and unbroken sunshine. The most undesirable thing in the history of cutting and curing hay, was rain. It spoiled its edibility for winter feeding and blighted its colour, taking away also its flavour and perfume. I never saw in this text any aspect of God which, to us on the farm, was agreeable and to be admired. I did not like to think of Him as coming down like rain on mown grass.

But the correction came with later understanding. My prejudices were entirely due to ignorance. When the hay was cut, cured and snugly stored for use during the long, hungry days of winter, and when the July showers, warm and plenteous, fell on the short cropped grass, a fresh green quickly spread over the meadow's deadness like the harbinger of another springtime. The rain reached after, found and brought back the ebbing life of those dry roots and laid another colour on the field with the cheering promise of a second growth. A new flood of life was poured out on a dying field and wrought a miracle. Then I saw the meaning of our Bible poet.

God, to him, was like the reviving rain on the

withered roots of mown grass. This man of the sheep pasture closed his eyes and saw a withered meadow, exhausted, fruitless, ruined, reviving under a sweet warm shower. It symbolized for him God's love.

Now, let us move out of the cut meadows and into men's hearts. Like the meadow, they may be dry, sapless, unpromising, needing rain. The poet here says that God's life, so real, vital and eager, falls upon the dead areas of men's spiritual lives like showers upon the new-mown grass, and even though that life be ebbed or ebbing, it comes again and verdure soon spreads athwart the bare, brown field and all things are made new again.

You note that it was mown grass upon which the rain fell. Grass of the ebbed and aborted life. Its beauty and sweetness had gone and its growth was done. The vital currents had stopped. A meadow which ordinarily was a joy of the earth—a rich, growing thing—a nesting-place for birds, a feeding-place for hungry cattle, is now but a stretch of utter deadness. Meadows die? Yes. Verdure fade? Yes. Where once waved growing grass, blight and deadness come.

So with men's hearts, until, like the gentle rain, He comes down. Until my heart recognizes and feels the life of God flowing into it and responds to that life, as do the worn and sere blades of grass in the summer meadows to the shower, there is no real joy or power in life. Nothing revives hearts and

gives peace and power to life like the quickening showers of God. People do not always believe this statement. They go searching for other sources of life's verdure to beautify the parched meadow of their souls.

Is it possible for enthusiasm for purely intellectual achievements to refresh the heart and revive the soul as showers of rain revive the meadows? It never does. It never will. Yet hungry lives and empty souls often appeal for reviving only to intellectual things. There is a subtle kind of unspiritualizing selfishness in the mere intellectual joys of life. Intellectual pursuits may be idle and profitless, even poisonous for the soul. People somehow or other feel virtuous when they go out on intellectual excursions. They feel they are *en route* to that which blesses and makes men rich. Intellectual pursuits are of inestimable value, but things of literature and history and logic cannot feed the deeper yearnings of the soul and must not be expected to do so. Intellectual pursuits do revive the heart when they are spiritualized and glorified and sanctified by unselfish motives. Otherwise they, too, bind heart and life into zones of littleness and selfishness that taint and poison the spiritual life. I have yet to see life made over again with its sorrows and sin in its conscious emptiness and fruitlessness by the refreshing showers of a man's own thinking.

Art is blessing the world with a wonderful min-

istry. There is a chastening and beautifying reaction in the soul that follows a man's contact with art in any of its higher forms and phases. But have you ever seen art working for its own sake, alone and detached, refresh and renew the lifeless meadows of the heart? Art, when sanctified by motives of service, brings a joy into life that satisfies. Lorado Taft, the sculptor, again and again has said that he finds his joy in working solely to help men see life and know it more and more. But some of the most unhappy lives in history have been those devoted to the noblest things of the art world. Art may be a selfish enthusiasm that belittles and spoils a man's larger and nobler life. One of the greatest architects of America has left a name we hardly mention in good company without an apology. Art works its miracles of spiritual beauty. Daniel H. Burnham was one of the greatest constructive architects of his generation. And no man has left a more enduring monument than Mr. Burnham in the great masterpieces of civic reconstruction that have altered city building for all time and in all parts of the civilized world. Art was his servant, not his master. Art releases wonderful ideals in marble and bronze, in music and poetry, but even art in its ministry among men does not fall to the roots of our human needs and, like the soft, reviving rains, reach and satisfy the waiting hunger that is there. Something other must be had.

Will philanthropy come down like rain on the mown grass? There is a species of philanthropy that I have seen bearing the outward marks of that unselfish serving that fills life with spiritual joy and satisfaction, yet it is accompanied by the most bitter and cynical spirit toward the wrongs and inadequacies of society. It carries into the slums, with its enthusiasms for tabulations and surveys, a heart that spoils its outlook toward God and the whole human race. The pursuit that ordinarily is sure to bring joy and peace seems to start daily new revolts and wake new voices of pessimism. This mock altruism with its unhappy heart may find facts to record and figures to tabulate, but it will never find spiritual joy in service. The heart of such a philanthropist will lie like the dead meadow till there be opened into it an entrance for the life and spirit of God. Then will come a new joy-giving point of view in his work. Then hope and constructive enthusiasm will replace cynicism and despair.

We come back to the Psalmist's suggestion that our hearts are like the meadows, mown and void, waiting the reviving showers of God's own life. It is to our advantage to recognize this fact. The outlook on the race is not hopeful apart from the redemptive plans of Almighty God. There are facts that give us pain as we study the hearts of men, if we for one moment forget the impending showers from the overarching skies of God's love.

Here is where we root our hope in the final triumph of the good.

"God's in His heaven, all's right with the world." The dead and dried fields of godless living are stretching out on every side. They teem with millions of parched, unfruitful hearts of dissatisfied men. Athwart those fields like some blight that stays their wonderful possibilities, sin has gone. It aborts life. It spoils growth. It mars hope. It makes no difference whether a man lives in a mansion in the light and glory of a great modern city or in a grass hut in the brutalities of an African jungle, the blight works toward the same end and the reviving power must come from the same source,—out from the hills of God!

But here is the promise. "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass." No great yearning for more abundant life ever stirred a heart to cry out for Him but that He came down. "Oh God, give me Scotland or I die," said the great praying Reformer as he looked over his bleak meadow, and God came down and stamped a religious character upon the Scottish people, unparalleled outside of the Hebrew race. He kindled in their hearts a love for the Scriptures that two hundred and fifty years of changing world conditions have not quenched. He bestowed a kind of inspired gift for religious thinking in their minds, unmatched in any other men, and Scotland has gone on, from that day to this, shaping the spiritual

life and destiny of the world by her preachers and missionaries.

Jonathan Edwards, John and David Brainerd and George Whitefield saw a dead meadow in the hard, rude conditions of American life. It was as trying a spiritual dearth as ever broke the heart of God's people. They cried out for the rain upon the parched grass of primitive American life. They waited on God in prayer and pointed people to their sins as well as their Saviour. They saw at last the showers come down and this land was so richly refreshed that men are living, today, on the spiritual fruitage of those gracious revivings of early years. He will come down like rain on the dry heart if men want Him. He will fill their needy souls with a glow and fervour that mean power. Men's souls need rain. Roots of godly living are parched. Poor, withered hearts are waiting. And when the showers come, verdure returns again and a new life gladdens our spiritually drooping souls.

# XV

# THE WILL TO WILL

*"Grant us the will to fashion as we feel,*
*Grant us the strength to labour as we know.*
*Grant us the purpose, ribb'd and edged with steel,*
*To strike the blow.*
*Knowledge we ask not—knowledge Thou hast lent,*
*But, Lord, the will—there lies the bitter need:*
*Give me to build above the deep intent*
*The deed, the deed."*

—JOHN DRINKWATER.

*"Lord Jesus, who would think that I am Thine?*
*Ah! Who would think,*
*Who sees me ready to turn back and sink,*
*That Thou art mine?*
*I cannot hold Thee fast, though Thou art mine:*
*Hold Thou me fast*
*So earth shall know at last and Heaven at last*
*That I am Thine!"*

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

*"Self-orphaned by my will—*

* * * * *

*And willing to hate good and to hate love,*
*And willing to will on so evermore,*
*Scorning the past and damning the to-come."*

—ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

## XV

## THE WILL TO WILL

*"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets and stoneth them that are sent unto thee: how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings and ye would not."*—LUKE 13:34.

THERE is a magnificent endowment that God gives every man, which we call a free will. Lying within this endowment is the power to negative the very omnipotence of God Himself. It is this disposition and capacity for the "would not" in every man, that makes the pathetic and baffling situation represented in the text.

This question is at once in order. "If God really wishes His way with puny little men, and if His way is best, and if He is omnipotent, why does not God have His way with men?" "When He knows what is best for men in the light of ultimate good and when He knows the free choice of men actually runs counter to that good, why does He not step in with His preventing grace and coerce the choice of His children? Then would they never choose the wrong but always take the

right? " These questions bring back the time-honoured discussion of divine sovereignty and free will to which our fathers gave so much pulpit attention sixty years ago. Avoiding the academic and technical side of the subject, let us face the practical issues involved in the question, " Does God Almighty not get things done in men's hearts, when and where and as He pleases? "

It should be kept in mind that God was shut up to one of two alternatives in creating man. Either He had to bestow upon man that marvelous gift of freedom of his will, carrying with it the power of choice and the moral responsibility that goes with choosing, or else He had to create him a manikin with no freedom, no initiative, simply a human machine, governed from outside of itself and capable of assuming no responsibility of choice. The first alternative with the power of free choice and a liberty to say, " no," with a capacity for moral initiative, (a feature of God's own character) was the only alternative that an intelligent omnipotence could possibly allow in the vast material cosmos He had created. So the splendid endowment of free will came. Given to man the freedom of his will, permit him to pick and choose as he wishes amidst the good and bad, and you have opened the road toward God-likeness and moral perfection on one hand, and the road toward the moral ruin that wilfulness and the power of making the wrong choice always bring, on the other hand.

A man cannot be free in his will to choose and at the same time be coerced and guided by someone outside. It is easy to see how God, having created us as He has, and knowing that moral character comes only through the power of free choice in the presence of both bad and good, must let men move as they will in a world organized as this is.

There is a glory and a majesty in this divine bequest of freedom that crown us with God-like possibilities. It would thrill all men were they led to appreciate the nobility and high honour which this God-like quality of free choice confers. In this matter we walk on a plane with God Himself. We assume authority and responsibility that are native to Him. This is the culminating feature in our creation separating us from the animal world like an ocean separates continents. This power of choosing, this willing to do or not to do, to say "yea" or "nay," this unfettered liberty of the soul that chains and bars cannot confine, that God Himself cannot compel—this is a true quality of divine likeness.

Old Confucius said, "The general of a large army may be defeated, but you cannot defeat the determined mind of a peasant." This is the finest achievement in nature, this acting, willing, choosing man, doing, saying, being what he will.

We turn to the other side of the question that is pathetically revealed in our text. Jesus stood on

the shoulder of the Mount of Olives and looked down upon a great city where, complacent and self-determined in their wilful disregard of Him and His teaching, sat the people most highly endowed spiritually of any race in history. Realizing the tragic use these spiritually endowed people had made of their liberty, and in sorrow, weeping, He said, "O Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thee as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings—but ye would not." It is this inherent ability to outwit the loving purposes of our Lord, and thus, in suicidal fashion work the spiritual ruin of ourselves as a people, that now blinds the eyes of Jesus with tears. He is sadly aware of the fact that He looks down upon a splendid city where ceremony and ritual have smothered the spiritual life of the nation and where moral initiative in priest and people is dead. It is this capacity for opposition on the part of the human will to the plans and purposes of God that shuts men into narrowness, unspirituality and fruitless living. To man has been given this noble faculty that through it he might rise toward God. The pathos of the situation lies in the fact that that which could be a supreme faculty through which God's life might enter his own soul, man uses to shut God out of his life.

In the presence of limitless spiritual power, man's supreme need is the willing will! In the fourth stanza of "In Memoriam," Tennyson

recognizes the fact of our personal freedom and the moral obligation it imposes, when he says

> *"Our wills are ours, we know not how;*
> *Our wills are ours, to make them Thine."*

It has long been considered facetious and clever to travesty the doctrinal statement that this world and everything in it was predetermined and irrevocably fixed by the will of an infinite God! The doctrine involved in this field of discussion as it is particularly related to the salvation of men, is called the doctrine of election. During the long controversy, this doctrine was bitterly assailed as utterly negating man's free will and making personal choice impossible. But the wisest controversialists have never succeeded in establishing a middle ground of agreement.

There are interesting and gifted people whose wills unconsciously are preventing that fuller entrance of God's life into their souls. They do not deliberately plan to set their wills in opposition to His, nor in any way to prevent a richer inflowing of spiritual life into their souls. But the effect wrought by indifference, or premeditation, is the same. They are like many of the people drifting through art galleries. They have impulses toward the things that have brought them across the threshold of the building. They know they ought to love such things as are there, since they are among the world's chief treasures of beauty. They

know that good pictures liberate souls and set men free from the dull, clogging things that hold them down. So they enter and walk aimlessly through the corridors where the world's masterpieces hang. But the will to absorb these great themes of art, to inhale the atmosphere that fills those noble corridors is not theirs. They are conscious of a shallow pleasure in the presence of the beautiful and perhaps a satisfaction that all feel when doing the right thing. But with their will inert and flabby and with a mental purpose indefinite, if not idle, they pass by Inness and Corot and Troyon and Meissonier. They walk where immortal genius has spread the visions of its soul and nothing goes out from their wills, no vital, eager desire, to take hold of what they see. The corridors finally traversed, they pass out and forget the glories that are never to die.

People, through long habit or coerced by social custom, go to church. They hear the Bible read, prayers offered, hymns sung, sermons preached. They listen, they approve, they feel a certain indefinite satisfaction like the people of the art galleries. But in no way do they send their active, eager wills out toward the truth they hear or toward the duty and moral obligation suggested by the things they hear. Without the active, willing will, nothing comes.

But there are those who are deliberately indifferent to the things of God. They plan not to have a

live, personal interest in spiritual matters. They do not wish to will, where it involves sacrifice and service. They are not of those who get under the burdens of people or take tasks that run athwart their own personal desires. They avoid duties and irksome cross-bearing. They find slight but innumerable and successful excuses for declining to do that which they do not wish to do because it takes moral initiative and some degree of sacrifice of personal comfort and convenience. Jesus stands over against these unwilling people who have the power of choice and use it to serve selfishness, and I hear Him say, " Oh, indifferent people, who choose deliberately to make of no avail your Christian life, by your will, keeping God out of your souls and preventing a larger life of love from pouring out upon others, how often would I have filled your heart with joy and blessing and made you a spiritual power in helping others, but ye would not." One hears that voice often today. There are tears of regret and unrequited love in every word. It is a case of divine omnipotence standing outside the door of the human will, unable to enter. Human personality is inviolable in God's sight. He never enters until the door is opened for Him.

Indifference keeps holy, life-giving things at a distance—as effectively as hostile unbelief. It shuts life into confines just as narrow and Christless as infidelity. It may be at times easier to find

the open door of the will of a frank sceptic than that of a selfish, indifferent, nominal believer who may be a complacent church-member making nothing of his privileges or responsibilities.

Men are not generally waiting for arguments. It is not generally more information they want, nor any further intellectual appeal. It is not so often something in the mind that keeps Christ at a distance. It is the "will to will." It is simply that men have not reached the point where Christ means so much to their life that they are willing to will that He shall come in and take the supreme place and control their lives. And so He stands outside, this Almighty Saviour, with the love of all Heaven in His heart. He respects so completely the majesty of man's liberty as a free agent, entitled to do as he pleases, that He will not coerce his will nor force open the door of his heart. But He continues to stand at the threshold with an eternal pathos in His words, saying, "How often and constantly would I—but ye would not." "I am ready to make your life rich and strong for God—but ye will not." "I will put a joy and a spirit of loving service into your heart and send you out on errands of help—but ye will not." And so the divine capacity given of God as a means to bring us into spiritual fellowship with Him, is exercised to keep Him at a distance.

# XVI

# GOD IN HIS WORLD

*"What though in solemn silence all*
*Move round this dark terrestrial ball?*
*What though nor real voice nor sound*
*Amidst their radiant orbs be found?*
*In reason's ear they all rejoice,*
*And utter forth a glorious voice;*
*For ever singing as they shine*
*'The Hand that made us is divine.'"*

—ADDISON.

*"I come in the little things,*
*Saith the Lord:*
*Yea! on the glancing wings*
*Of eager birds, the softly pattering feet*
*Of furred and gentle beasts, I come to meet*
*Your hard and wayward heart, in brown bright eyes*
*That peep from out the brake I stand confest.*

* * * * *

*I come in the little things,*
*Saith the Lord:*
*My starry wings*
*I do forsake,*
*Love's highway of humility to take:*
*Meekly I fit my stature to your need.*
*In beggar's part*
*About your gates I shall not cease to plod—*
*As man, to speak with man—*
*Till by such art*
*I shall achieve my Immemorial Plan,*
*Pass the low lintels of the human heart."*

—EVELYN UNDERHILL.

## XVI

## GOD IN HIS WORLD

*"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."*—GENESIS 1 : 1.

SOME people look at the world and see a stupendous organization of animal, vegetable, and mineral matter, and nothing more. They marvel at the mystery of life in man and at the subtle instinct of bird and beast. They grow ecstatic over the beauty and glory of the spectacle of the vegetable world in its career from bloom to fruit, they see epochs and ages of limitless time in the rocks and metal veins of earth. They look at the whole vast intricate moving-picture of nature, but they are so fascinated by the details of the picture that they do not see the original Producer, nor the plot and purpose that bind these details into unity. They see nothing behind or beyond the surface of the shifting, changing film that carries before their eyes the vast panorama of the world. They see only that at which they look, no more.

On the other hand, to the old Hebrew poets and to all men with spiritualized perceptions, God, the author, preserver and director of the world, is the

conspicuous and outstanding feature of every spectacle in nature. Such interpretative men look at the sky and sea and mountains and think of Him. They walk abroad at night and when the white stars shine upon them out of the Syrian skies or through the great telescopes of today, they think of Him. In the violent storms and earthquakes they hear His voice. Looking at the brilliant beauty of the lilies in the fields and the waving corn on the hill slopes, they see Him. They see more than that at which they look.

God should be set into the foreground of our thoughts as we watch the forces of nature, particularly in that indescribable period of activity we call Spring. We must not permit such a pageant of wonder to go by, and see only the trappings and external things that clothe Him who moves in the midst of it all. We must be alive to the very depths of our souls and highly sensitive to the signs and symbols that are all about. We must look quickly, ask questions promptly and draw conclusions truly but swiftly lest, before we become aware of the grandeur and the impressiveness of the moment, the scenes of spring and summer be shifted and we come again to the static spectacle of winter.

In the first chapter of Genesis is the most impressive statement of God in relation to His world that has ever been committed to writing. It is not a story of which the microscope or the telescope were accessories. It is not the story of chemistry,

nor geology, nor the statement of some spectroscopist, nor physicist. It is the voice of an inspired faith, speaking without a knowledge of the scientific facts, but in supreme confidence. The earth was flat to the man who penned Genesis in the darkness of that lost period of history in which he wrote. So far as he was concerned, there was no law of gravity holding in great orbits the worlds that swung about him. To him there was no science of astronomy that pierced the limitless spaces above him and revealed the interstellar secrets that our schoolboys know. There was no geology that laid bare the great facts beneath the surface of the earth, no chemistry that analyzed the atoms and disintegrated the ions. The man that wrote the record of Genesis did not need this data for his purpose. He had but one purpose. That purpose was fully stated in the first four words of Genesis, "In the beginning, God."

Men who look so minutely into the material ingredients of the universe and become so familiar with cosmic dust and hot nebulæ and cells and atoms and ions, sometimes suffer spiritual near-sightedness. Consequently, they do not see the spiritual intelligence and personal omnipotence out of which it has all come. They get so close to the dirt and dust of inorganic things and become so occupied with the fascinating movements of dead matter in the grip of law, that they have no inclination to look beyond. This is an ever-present

temptation of men dealing with the material facts and forces of the universe. But it is wrong to hold that scientific men are all agnostics and atheists. The laboratories, observatories and classrooms of great scientists have been temples where God the Creator has been worshipped and His holy Name reverenced, a few notable exceptions to the contrary notwithstanding.

The way God made the universe, or the number of hours in His working days or the laws through which He operated, are utterly unimportant to our faith. We locate and define Him as the Creator and accord Him the right and the ability to make it as He pleases.

There are three observations to be made under this general subject of the world and God:

First: He made it.

Second: He maintains it.

Third: He holds its destiny in His hands.

This takes care of yesterday, today and tomorrow. We have no problems beyond these periods of time.

In the first place, then: How glad we are that man is not shut up to believe that he is a part of a dead world! We do not have to believe that the flow and counter-flow of inorganic, soulless matter, under impersonal cosmic laws or blind chance is all that life here is. If we felt that God was not, and that our life and world were simply responding to the resistless urge of blind laws coming out of

nothing, moving by the will of nothing and passing again into nothing, one would feel that life was but a career of tragic cruelty by which men were imposed on unfairly and without recourse or reparation. If there were no heart-throb in the pulsation of spring life, nor any signs or aims in the great stirring panorama passing before our eyes; if there were no reciprocation nor fellowship from birds or flowers or trees or skies or any of the great Spring and Summer facts; if we simply walked amidst it all, touching no heart, feeling the breath of no spirit, conscious of no benign hand, one should feel like a lifeless marionette dancing on a stage with other lifeless marionettes answering to the pull of invisible wires. Wooden things with wooden destiny.

Any theory which fails to locate God as Creator leaves us in the loneliest, darkest and most unhappy world that can be thought of. There are some men whose faith does not serve them at this juncture. They are like explorers lost in impenetrable jungles without compass or trail. They are beaten and baffled by the prodigious mass of materials standing about them, they cannot penetrate nor interpret the darkness, everything emphasizes their loneliness and proclaims their peril. They wait for a voice they do not hear, they look for a light that does not break, and daily life becomes to them a hopeless, embittered monotony, the end of which they covet. This is the stronghold of pessimism.

It is a tragic, spiritual affliction of unfaith. Fail to figure God into the intricate fabric of the jungle, through your inability to accept in faith the fact of God in the universe, and you write the doom of all joy and peace in the human heart. We start where Genesis starts or the journey of life from the cradle to the grave is an unbroken, tantalizing, painful journey. God's mind gave birth to the universe and His hand wrought it. James Russell Lowell sang the heart's true confession with the Genesis idea as a background when he said:

*"Through Thee, me seems, the very rose is red,*
*From Thee the violet steals its breath in May,*
*From Thee draw life all things that grow not gray*
*And by Thy force the happy stars are sped."*

The second observation has to do with God at work in His world today. He maintains it. He leaves the geological ages and operates in the vital present. We more easily give God credit for creation in an infinitely remote period of time. It all seems so indefinite and chaotic and far off, that we will accept any theory that will leave Him in the process and get the work done. But it is a different situation that we confront when you hand me a grain of sand or a lilac bud or a thrush's egg or a chemical formula for blood in my veins, or the dimensions of Saturn and say, "where is thy God here and now?"

Is God in evidence in your springtime pageant?

Are you only an imaginative poet weaving beautiful thoughts out of a fanciful brain and putting God here and law there and a great love everywhere?

Are you insisting on something your hungry heart wants, that cannot be found in all this depressing, speechlessness of nature? Is your radiant faith saying, "There He is." "Yonder He works." "This is His hand." Do you see Him, today, and walk in fields and forests conscious of Him?

Now that He started the enterprise and set the earth spinning down the grooves of time, we have a much less difficult task on hand to identify Him as the bountiful preserver and life-giving caretaker! Does the microscope show His trade-mark on flowers and fibre cells filled with rushing torrents of juicy sap? No. Does the blow-pipe find His name in the molten globules of minerals on the charcoal? No! Does the chemist find the Name of God wreathed in the gasses his laboratory distills today? No! Where speaks His voice so that men recognize Him, today? In the strata of the rocks? No! In the restless tides? No! In the skies? No! "As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be." As it was in Genesis in the remote morning of time, so it is in the revelation of God today. Faith in the presence of facts interprets Him as the original Creator and finds proof that confirms her belief. Faith today alone interprets Him as the bountiful daily preserver and

director of all things. Nature is a wonderful guide, but inarticulate. She forms no words, frames no theories, propounds no theology. Faith simply takes the glorious, but speechless materials, the laws and instincts at work about her, and through them recognizes the loving hand, the constant and sustaining presence of God. Faith reads the signs at the roadside and she hopefully moves on. Those roadside signs point her happy feet in but one direction, and that is Godward. She hears a voice and sees a hand and feels a presence where ordinary human words are not vocal and where the sight of the eyes reveals nothing but footprints of one who has walked there and the ear hears simply echoes of someone who has certainly spoken! But to faith this is enough and she goes forward singing her oratorios of " Creation " and her anthems of praise.

But tomorrow is the baffling element in getting our universe on a reasonable basis. It is the uncertainty of destiny that chills our blood. We see the things of time and space melt away and vanish and we wonder and anxiously wait! The inevitable dissolution of all things seems to block our soul's progress and shut the gate against our hope. We lay our loved one in the soft bosom of the earth just when we see signs of their beautiful unfolding. Fate goes crashing through the crowded ways of life and tramples down the forms of all living things just as ripeness and competency arrive to make

them most worth-while. Nations crumble to dust while cities decay and are lost to history. Nothing is static or enduring. All things change and pass and fade. Is there no stability? No continuing order? No culminating destiny? "If so soon it be done, why was it begun?" cries the man who lives only in this day and this world and sees doom written in every temporal thing! The woods break into colours, the glory of which no painter can catch! The hills are clad in a verdure that is constantly renewed. Fruit swings in the trees and flowers bloom in the mould. The forces of summertime mobilize triumphantly in field and pasture. There are weeks of beautiful growing, a harvest of fruiting, then death and decay and the clearing of the stage for reacting the same old drama again next year!

Is this all? Was this that for which we came forth? Does this satisfy the surging soul within us? Has faith a word that may here be spoken that will suggest a destiny, glorious and immortal out of dirt and decay? Yes! Faith sees the whole dissolving procession as it rises, moves through its little day—its springtime, its summer and autumn and as it is about to pass to death beneath the harsh heel of winter, says, "there is no winter in the calendar of the soul." Everlasting Springtime is the destiny of immortal men. Under God, life is ever new and always. Its journey is never thwarted, its unfolding never halted.

This is the voice of faith speaking. Browning catches the indomitable note in that voice of faith when he sings:

*"I see my path as birds their trackless way,*
*I shall arrive! What time, what circuit first,*
*I ask not: but unless God sends His hail*
*Or blinding fire balls, sleet or stifling snow,*
*In some time, His good time, I shall arrive.*
*He guides me and the bird, in His good time."*

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